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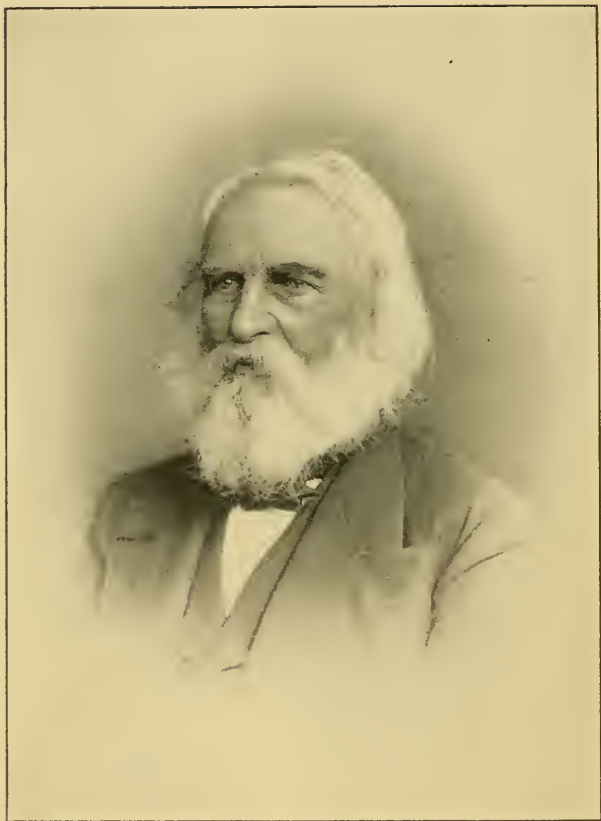
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HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

LONGFELLOW'S

THE COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH

AND MINOR POEMS

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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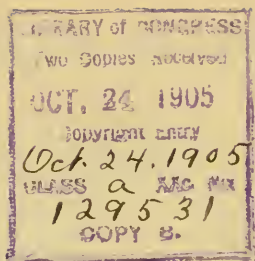
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INTRODUCTION

I

THE MAN AND POET

Birth

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born February 27, 1807, in Portland, Maine, in a house still standing and known as "the Longfellow House." His parents, Stephen and Zilpha (Wadsworth) Longfellow were descendants from Yorkshire families that had come to this country in the latter half of the seventeenth century. Henry, the second son, received his name from a maternal uncle, Henry Wadsworth. The boyhood years of the poet were spent in the beautiful city of Portland, with its charming view across the bay, the mountains at the other side, and Deering's Woods in the outskirts, where the boys of the city spent many Saturday afternoons and holidays. The *Life*, edited by his brother Samuel, brings before us an interesting picture of the poet's early days at home.

Youth

"Henry is remembered by others as a lively boy, with brown or chestnut hair, blue eyes, a delicate complexion, and rosy cheeks; sensitive, impressionable; active, eager, impetuous, often impatient;

quick-tempered, but as quickly appeased; kind-hearted and affectionate, — the sunlight of the house. He had great neatness and love of order. He was always extremely conscientious, ‘remarkably solicitous always to do right,’ his mother wrote. ‘True, high-minded and noble, — never a mean thought or act,’ says his sister; injustice in any shape he could not brook. He was industrious, prompt, and persevering; he went into everything he undertook with great zest.”

Education Inheriting from his mother a very sensitive and romantic imagination and from his father traits of natural courtesy and honesty, Henry Longfellow grew up in a home where books and music were common and where he learned to value fine character, true friends, and good reading. He received his first education at the Portland Academy; at the age of fourteen he entered Bowdoin College, founded twenty years before at Brunswick, and graduated in the class of 1825, not with great distinction but as one of the honor men of an especially strong class. That for some time the question of a profession had been occupying his mind is attested by a letter which he wrote to his father in December before he graduated and which revealed interestingly the aspiration of the young collegian.

Profession “I take this early opportunity to write you, because I wish to follow fully your inclina-

tion with regard to the profession I am to pursue when I leave college. For my part I have already hinted to you what would best please me. I want to spend a year at Cambridge for the purpose of reading history and of becoming familiar with the best authors of polite literature; whilst at the same time I can be acquiring a knowledge of the Italian language, without an acquaintance with which I shall be shut out from one of the most beautiful departments of letters. The French I mean to understand pretty thoroughly before I leave college. After leaving Cambridge I would attach myself to some literary periodical publication, by which I could maintain myself and still enjoy the advantages of reading. Now, I do not think that there is anything visionary or chimerical in my plan thus far. The fact is — and I will not disguise it in the least, for I think I ought not — the fact is, I most eagerly aspire after future eminence in literature; my whole soul burns most ardently for it, and every earthly thought centres in it. There may be something visionary in this, but I flatter myself that I have prudence enough to keep my enthusiasm from defeating its own object by too great haste. Surely there was never a better opportunity offered for the exertion of literary talent in our own country than is now offered.

“Whether Nature has given me any capacity for knowledge or not, she has at any rate given me a

very strong predilection for literary pursuits, and I am almost confident in believing that, if I can ever rise in this world, it must be by the exercise of my talent in the wide field of literature. With such a belief, I must say that I am unwilling to engage in the study of law."

To this letter the father replied, discouraging the proposed literary career, but approving the plan of the year at Cambridge.

Immediately upon graduation, Longfellow
First appointment received the appointment to the recently created department of Modern Language at Bowdoin, with the permission to spend the year abroad in travel and study. The remainder of the year 1826 he spent in France; then eight months in Spain, a year in Italy, and half a year in Germany brought him back, eager and enthusiastic for the new work in the autumn of 1829. His lectures covered the various modern languages, Italian, Spanish, and French, and were prepared and delivered with the genuine ardor of a young romanticist. As a pioneer in the study and teaching of modern, foreign literature, he was compelled to compile his own text-books, collect a library, and stimulate interest in a new field. Endowed naturally with a fine faculty for translative work, and equipped by training with the knowledge of several languages, the young instructor soon won a more than local reputation.

Marriage and Harvard Appointment In 1831 he married Mary Storer Potter, daughter of Judge Barrett Potter, of Portland. The two had been schoolmates when they were children, but had scarcely seen each other since childhood. The next three years were a season of great happiness to the young writer. His college life was going successfully and the poet looked forward to a clearer expression of himself in a more definite form than teaching. It was not strange then that he soon felt the restrictions of the little college and began to look elsewhere. Fortune favored him and threw in his way the best offer that could come to him, the professorship of Modern Languages at Harvard, a position that was then held by the distinguished historian and critic, George Ticknor. Longfellow gladly accepted the appointment and also the proposition that he might go to Europe for a year or more to study.

In Europe His trip, beginning in April, 1835, was marked with great sorrow, for after a year in England and Norway and Sweden they crossed to Holland, where Mrs. Longfellow died, November 29, 1835. After one more year in Germany and Switzerland, he returned in October, 1836, prepared to enter upon his new work at Cambridge. He secured lodgings in the famous Craigie House and settled down to the routine of academic instruction. The story of Longfellow's going to live in the Craigie House is most

At
Cambridge interestingly told by George William Curtis, in his *Homes of American Authors*. Thus began the period of Longfellow's maturity. Well-established in a position of exceptional prominence, in a community distinguished for its literary traditions and ideals, surrounded by a group of friends who were inspired by equally lofty motives and purposes, the professor and poet appeared to be especially favored by fortune.

In 1842 Longfellow made his third visit to Europe, spending most of his six months in places on the Rhine. In the following July he married Frances Elizabeth Appleton; a happy union, terminated only by the sudden and tragic death of the wife in 1861.

Perhaps these are the only facts for record in a stretch of years which displayed the poet's great calmness and faith and which extended his name to all parts of the world. Gradually the routine of university work became more and more irksome and strengthened his determination to relinquish his position that he might have all his time for writing. On the last day of 1853 the poet wrote in his journal: "How barren
Resignation of all poetic production and even prose production, this last year has been! For 1853 I have absolutely nothing to show. Really there has been nothing but the college work." On several occasions he had expressed similar sentiments. Consequently

his resignation of February 16, 1854, was not at all unexpected by many of his friends. This gave to the poet the leisure which he had long desired, and opened a new period in his career. His house became the literary centre of America and attracted to its hospitality prominent authors of America and Europe.

End of life After the sad death of Mrs. Longfellow the poet led a life of great seclusion, scarcely leaving his Cambridge house, save for a fourth visit to Europe in 1868 and the summers in his cottage at Nahant. His remaining years were occupied with his literary work, made happier by many honest tributes of praise from all the ranks of people of every nation. Then was shown the true royalty of the man, never losing heart, always full of kindness to friend and stranger, until the end. He died at home March 24, 1882, beloved by many thousands in all the countries where simple and tender poetry has the power to move. Thus passed a life of unusual purity, nobility, and serenity, altogether worthy of the great calling of poet. No star of evil fame besmirched that royal face. Criticism had laid its stinging finger upon him, but he had maligned none. Shortly afterward, Dr. Holmes wrote in the *Atlantic Monthly*, "But it is all too little, for his life was so exceptionally sweet and musical that any voice of praise sounds almost like a discord after it."

Though Henry Longfellow will ever be known to

many as a man and neighbor, to more as an inspiring teacher, to the world at large he will always be Long-fellow, the poet. As such, fame accords him his rank. His first poem, entitled *The Battle of Lovell's Pond*, appeared in the *Portland Gazette*, November 17, 1820. From that day he contributed to various newspapers and periodicals a list of poems, noteworthy chiefly as the beginning of an illustrious career.

First
poetry

Immediately after his graduation, he published a number of pieces, only seven of which were afterward included in *Voices of the Night*, in 1839. These early poems were especially imitative, but they showed the poet's effort at rhythm and a sensitiveness to the world of nature about him.

*Voices of the
Night*

The letter of 1824, above quoted, showed in what direction the study, reading, and thinking had led the poet. The following years were occupied by translations, critical essays and reviews, and a few original poems. Significant was an essay on *The Defence of Poetry* (*North American Review*, 1832), which insisted that the true greatness of America lay in the "extent of mental power, the majesty of its intellect, the height and depth and purity of its moral nature," and pleaded for a literature that would bear the national stamp of American life and American nature.

Translations

With the publication of the *Voices of the Night* in 1839, Longfellow began a career as poet which continued almost unbroken to the end of his life.

The complete record of his published works will be found in the chronological table on pages xx-xxiii.

II

COMMENT ON HIS WORK

Popularity Longfellow has always been the most popular and widely known of American poets. Something of the universality of his fame may be recognized by turning to Mr. Higginson's *Life* of the poet and observing the translations of his poems into various languages, and also other evidence which he gives in the same volume. To define the characteristics of a writer whose poems are household words, whose subjects and characters come before us at the mention of the poet's name, proposes for the critic a difficult task. And yet there is well-nigh unanimous judgment in regard to certain of the characteristics of the poet.

Feeling for nature Longfellow's feeling for nature was genuine and sincere. He loved the out-of-doors and liked to bring into his poetry pictures of the nature ever dear to him from those youthful

days spent in Deering's Woods. Every page holds figures or passages descriptive of the world without, — in the spring, in autumn, in rain, in the heavy foliage of the summer, or in the snows of winter. Great is the range of subject, and yet we do not look to Longfellow's poetry for an individual interpretation of nature. It is always the same calm, serene, tender, and melancholy world, with none of those glimpses into mystery or reaches into sublimity.

The poet of
everyday
life Most of all is Longfellow to be remembered
as the poet of everyday life. Such poems as
The Village Blacksmith mirror the scenes
of common day and surround them with a halo of idealization. A simple strain of moralizing runs through his pictures, and finds its path to the heart of every race. With all their triteness and conventional moralizing, with their lack of profound and individual thinking, such poems as *A Psalm of Life*, *The Reaper and the Flowers*, *Excelsior*, *The Day is Done*, and a score of others, will make their appeal because of the natural and graceful rhythm, their simple themes, and the note of hopeful courage that lifts the tired soul out of the depths of discouragement.

Translator Longfellow was preëminently a translator.
Living in a time when only a half-dozen in America knew of the great writers of modern literature, he eagerly sought to lay those riches before his country-

men. Many a little poem has been rescued by him from an unworthy setting and made to shine with a new lustre. From the little pieces of translation of obscure writers to his superb translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, his career as a translator would alone have secured distinction. As it happened, that was but one of his many activities. Perhaps his own work suffered appreciably in local color and individuality for this reason, that the poet was so much at home with all the literatures of modern Europe.

Versatility Longfellow may be called the most versatile of our American poets, at least in his use of poetic forms. He tried the various kinds of lyric and has scarcely been excelled in the sonnet and in the lyric of simple feeling, as *Driftwood*, *Resignation*, and *Sandalphon*. He wrote parts of several dramas, none of which, however, attested the real dramatic power of their author. Finally, he essayed the epic, in the *Tales of a Wayside Inn* and in the three poems which will be known perhaps longest of all his works, *Evangeline*, *Hiawatha*, and *The Courtship of Miles Standish*. In these three pieces the Indian romance, the early pastoral and colonial romance, Longfellow has probably come nearest to writing poetry which may be called truly American.

III

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

LONGFELLOW, 1807-1882.	OUTLINE OF AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1807-1880.
1807. Birth.	1807. <i>Salmagundi</i> published (first series).
	1809. <i>Knickerbocker's History</i> published.
	1815. <i>North American Review</i> founded.
	1817. Bryant's <i>Thanatopsis</i> .
	1819. Irving's <i>Sketch-Book</i> . Halleck-Drake's <i>The Croaker Papers</i> .
	1820. Cooper's first story — <i>Precaution</i> .
1821. Entered Bowdoin.	1821. Bryant's poems. Cooper's <i>Spy</i> .
	1822. Irving's <i>Bracebridge Hall</i> .
	1823. Cooper's <i>The Pilot</i> . <i>The Pioneer</i> .
1825. Graduated from Bowdoin. Received appointment at Bowdoin.	
1826. First poems. Went to Europe.	1826. Cooper's <i>Last of Mohicans</i> .
1827. In Spain.	1827. Poe's (first volume) <i>Tamerlane and Other Poems</i> . <i>Youth's Companion</i> established.
1828. In Italy.	1828. Hawthorne's first story, <i>Fanshawe</i> . Webster's <i>Dictionary</i> .
1829. Returned to America, professor at Bowdoin.	
1831. Married Mary Storer Potter.	1831. Whittier's <i>Legends of New England</i> .
	1832. Bryant's poems.

1833. *Outre-Mer* published.
1833. *Knickerbocker's Magazine* founded.
Poe's *MS. found in a Bottle*.
- 1834-1856. Professor of Modern Languages at Harvard.
1834. *Southern Literary Messenger* established, to which Poe contributed.
1835. Abroad. Mrs. Longfellow died at Rotterdam.
1836. In Germany, Switzerland, and returned home.
1836. Emerson's *Nature*.
Holmes's poems.
1837. Moved to Craigie House.
1837. Whittier's poems.
Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales*.
1839. *Voices of the Night*.
Hyperion.
1840. Dana's *Two Years before the Mast*.
1841. *Ballads and Other Poems*.
1841. Emerson's *Essays*.
1842. Abroad six months.
Poems on Slavery.
1843. *Spanish Student*.
1843. Prescott's *History of Mexico*.
1845. *Poets and Poetry of Europe*.
1845. Poe's *The Raven and Other Poems*.
1846. *Belfry of Bruges and Other Poems*.
1846. Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse*.
1847. *Evangeline*.
1848. Lowell's *Biglow Papers*.
Vision of Sir Launfal.
1849. *Kavanagh — A Tale*.
1849. Parkman's *The California and Oregon Trail*.
Thoreau's *A Week*.
Ticknor's *History of Spanish Literature*.
1850. *The Seaside and the Fireside*.
1850. Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*.
Harper's Magazine established.
1851. *The Golden Legend*.
1851. Hawthorne's *House of the Seven Gables*.

1852. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.
1854. Thoreau's *Walden*.
1855. Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.
1856. Motley's *Rise of Dutch Republic*.
1857. *Atlantic Monthly* established.
1858. *Courtship of Miles Standish*. 1858. Holmes's *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*.
1860. Hawthorne's *Marble Faun*.
Emerson's *Conduct of Life*.
1861. Death of Mrs. Longfellow. 1861. Mrs. Howe's *Battle Hymn of the Republic*.
1865. Lowell's *Commemoration Ode*. Whitman's *Drum-Taps*.
1866. Whittier's *Snow-Bound*.
1867. Translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy*.
Flower-de-Luce.
1868. Fourth trip to Europe. 1868. Hale's *The Man without a Country*.
Alcott's *Little Women*.
1869. Aldrich's *Story of a Bad Boy*.
Mark Twain's *Innocents Abroad*.
1870. Lowell's *Among my Books*.
Bret Harte's *Luck of Roaring Camp*.
Scribner's Magazine founded
(became *The Century* in 1881).
1871. *Divine Tragedy*. 1871. Bryant's translation of the
Odyssey.
Eggleston's *Hoosier Schoolmaster*.
Burroughs's *Wake Robin*.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1872. <i>Three Books of Song.</i> | 1872. Warner's <i>Backlog Studies.</i> |
| 1873. <i>Aftermath.</i> | |
| 1875. <i>Masque of Pandora.</i> | 1876. Mark Twain's <i>Tom Sawyer.</i> |
| | Lanier's poems. |
| 1878. <i>Keramos.</i> | |
| 1880. <i>Ultima Thule.</i> | 1880. Harris's <i>Uncle Remus</i> |
| | <i>Stories.</i> |
| 1882. <i>In the Harbor.</i> | |
| 1882. <i>Death.</i> | |

IV

BOOKS FOR CONSULTATION

- Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, with Extracts from his Journals and Correspondence.* Edited by Samuel Longfellow. Ticknor & Co. 3 vols.
- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.* By Thomas Wentworth Higginson. (American Men of Letters Series.) Houghton, Mifflin, & Co.
- Longfellow* (Beacon Biographies). G. R. Carpenter.
- Poets of America.* E. C. Stedman.
- Literary and Social Essays.* G. W. Curtis.
- American Literature*, Vol. II. C. F. Richardson.
- Literary Friends and Acquaintance.* W. D. Howells.
- A Literary History of America.* Barrett Wendell.
- The best edition of Longfellow's works is *The Riverside* in eleven volumes. The best single volume is *The Cambridge* edition. Both are published by Houghton, Mifflin, & Co.
- Chronological Outlines of American Literature.* S. L. Whitcomb.

V

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY

The selections contained in the present volume will be found to include a very representative part of Longfellow's poems from the first volume to the publication of "The Wayside Inn." Therefore, we have here sufficient material for a careful study of the forms and manner of the poet.

First of all, poetry is written to be read and understood. We should, therefore, not be content till we have read through the poem and have derived the general meaning and as much as possible of the signification of every word and phrase. Above all, poetry is written for pleasure in the highest sense. So we should not be diverted from the beauty of the melody and the truth of theme by the analysis of words or a research into the allusions mentioned.

After the poems have been comprehended individually, they will fall naturally into certain groups, according to the point of view from which they are regarded. The following divisions may be suggestive of others:—

(1) *Poems contributing to the poet's biography.* — *Footsteps of Angels, To the River Charles, Resignation, The Two Angels, My Lost Youth, The Old Clock on the Stairs.*

(2) *Epic and lyric*. — Under the term epic may be included the romance of *Miles Standish*, the stirring ballads of *The Wreck of the Hesperus*, *The Skeleton in Armor*, and the idyl of *The Village Blacksmith*. The lyric will embrace the sonnets to *Autumn* and to *Dante*, the ode on *The Building of the Ship* and such reflective poems as *The Psalm of Life*, *The Day is Done*, *Sandalphon*, *Resignation*, *Fire of Driftwood*, and many others.

(For a study of the structure of poetry see C. F. Johnson's *Forms of English Poetry*, American Book Company. For the particular study of the ballad, see W. D. Armes's *Old English Ballads*, Pocket Classic Series, The Macmillan Company.)

(3) *The metrical structure of the poem*. *The Courtship of Miles Standish* in dactylic hexameter, the sonnet, the ballad stanza, the irregular stanzas of *Seaweed* and *Building of the Ship*, the refrains, and the common three, four, five, and six lined stanzas. (See R. M. Alden's *English Verse*. Henry Holt & Co.)

(4) *The central theme*. — The comforting power of nature, as in *Sunrise on the Hills*, *Spirit of Poetry*; hopeful courage, *Psalm of Life*, *Light of Stars*, *Excelsior*; the value of every day, *Building of the Ship*, *Village Blacksmith*, *Ladder of Saint Augustine*, *Santa Filomena*; the true religious trust in God, *Footsteps of Angels*, *The Reaper and the Flowers*; one's regard for

one's own work, *Prometheus* and *Epimetheus*; love and friendship, *The Golden Mile-Stone*, *Children*.

The object of the study of poetry is at least twofold:

(a) Appreciation of the truth which the poet wishes to convey.

(b) Appreciation of the way in which he conveys that truth.

Whatever will encourage this appreciation should be commended; whatever does not, should be rejected.

THE COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH
AND MINOR POEMS

THE COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH

I

MILES STANDISH^o

IN the Old Colony days, in Plymouth the land of the
Pilgrims,
To and fro in a room of his simple and primitive dwell-
ing,^o
Clad in doublet^o and hose, and boots of Cordovan^o
leather,
Strode, with a martial air, Miles Standish the Puritan
Captain.
Buried in thought he seemed, with his hands behind
him, and pausing 5
Ever and anon to behold his glittering weapons of war-
fare,
Hanging in shining array along the walls of the cham-
ber, —
Cutlass and corselet^o of steel, and his trusty sword of
Damascus,^o
Curved at the point and inscribed with its mystical
Arabic sentence,
While underneath, in a corner, were fowling-piece,^o
musket, and matchlock.^o 10
Short of stature he was, but strongly built and athletic,
Broad in the shoulders, deep-chested, with muscles and
sinews of iron;

Brown as a nut was his face, but his russet beard was
already
Flaked with patches of snow, as hedges sometimes in
November.
Near him was seated John Alden,^o his friend and house-
hold companion,¹⁵
Writing with diligent speed at a table of pine by the
window;
Fair-haired, azure-eyed, with delicate Saxon complex-
ion,
Having the dew of his youth, and the beauty thereof,
as the captives
Whom Saint Gregory saw, and exclaimed, "Not An-
gles but Angels."^o
Youngest of all was he of the men who came in the
Mayflower.²⁰

Suddenly breaking the silence, the diligent scribe
interrupting,
Spake, in the pride of his heart, Miles Standish the
Captain of Plymouth.
"Look at these arms," he said, "the warlike weapons
that hang here
Burnished and bright and clean, as if for parade or
inspection!
This is the sword of Damascus I fought with in Flan-
ders^o; this breastplate,²⁵
Well I remember the day! once saved my life in a skir-
mish;
Here in front you can see the very dint of the bullet
Fired point-blank at my heart by a Spanish arcabucero.^o
Had it not been of sheer steel, the forgotten bones of
Miles Standish

Would at this moment be mould, in their grave in the
Flemish morasses." 30

Thereupon answered John Alden, but looked not up
from his writing:

"Truly the breath of the Lord hath slackened the speed
of the bullet;

He in his mercy preserved you, to be our shield and our
weapon!"

Still the Captain^o continued, unheeding the words of
the stripling:

"See, how bright they are burnished, as if in an arsenal
hanging; 35

That is because I have done it myself, and not left it to
others.

Serve yourself, would you be well served, is an excellent
adage;

So I take care of my arms, as you of your pens and your
inkhorn.

Then, too, there are my soldiers, my great, invincible
army,

Twelve men, all equipped, having each his rest and his
matchlock, 40

Eighteen shillings a month, together with diet and pil-
lage,

And, like Cæsar, I know the name of each of my soldiers!"

This he said with a smile, that danced in his eyes, as the
sunbeams

Dance on the waves of the sea, and vanish again in a
moment.

Alden laughed as he wrote, and still the Captain con-
tinued: 45

"Look! you can see from this window my brazen how-
itzer^o planted

High on the roof of the church, a preacher who speaks
to the purpose,
Steady, straightforward, and strong, with irresistible
logic,
Orthodox, flashing conviction right into the hearts of
the heathen.
Now we are ready, I think, for any assault of the
Indians:
Let them come, if they like, and the sooner they try it⁵⁰
the better, —
Let them come if they like, be it sagamore, sachem, or
pow-wow,^o
Aspinet, Samoset, Corbitant, Squanto, or Tokamaha-
mon^o !”

Long at the window he stood, and wistfully gazed on
the landscape,
Washed with a cold gray mist, the vapory breath of the
east-wind,
Forest and meadow and hill, and the steel-blue rim of the⁵⁵
ocean;
Lying silent and sad, in the afternoon shadows and sun-
shine.
Over his countenance flitted a shadow like those on the
landscape,
Gloom intermingled with light; and his voice was sub-
dued with emotion,
Tenderness, pity, regret, as after a pause he pro-
ceeded:
“Yonder there, on the hill by the sea, lies buried Rose⁶⁰
Standish^o;
Beautiful rose of love, that bloomed for me by the way-
side !

She was the first to die of all who came in the May-flower!

Green above her is growing the field of wheat we have sown there,

Better to hide from the Indian scouts the graves of our people,

Lest they should count them and see how many already have perished!"

Sadly his face he averted, and strode up and down, and was thoughtful.

Fixed to the opposite wall was a shelf of books, and among them

Prominent three, distinguished alike for bulk and for binding;

Barriſſe's Artillery Guide,^o and the Commentaries of Cæſar,

Out of the Latin translated by Arthur Goldinge of London,^o

And, as if guarded by these, between them was standing the Bible.

Musing a moment before them, Miles Standish paused, as if doubtful

Which of the three he should choose for his consolation and comfort,

Whether the wars of the Hebrews, the famous campaigns of the Romans,

Or the Artillery practice, designed for belligerent Christians.

Finally down from its shelf he dragged the ponderous Roman,

Seated himself at the window, and opened the book, and in silence

Turned o'er the well-worn leaves, where thumb-marks
 thick on the margin,
 Like the trample of feet, proclaimed the battle was hot-
 test. 80
 Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of
 the stripling,
 Busily writing epistles important, to go by the May-
 flower,
 Ready to sail on the morrow,^o or next day at latest,
 God willing !
 Homeward bound with the tidings of all that terrible
 winter,
 Letters written by Alden, and full of the name of Pris-
 cilla,^o 85
 Full of the name and the fame of the Puritan maiden
 Priscilla !

II

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

NOTHING was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of
 the stripling,
 Or an occasional sigh from the laboring heart of the
 Captain,
 Reading the marvellous words and achievements of
 Julius Cæsar.
 After a while he exclaimed, as he smote with his hand,
 palm downwards, 90
 Heavily on the page : " A wonderful man was this Cæsar !
 You are a writer, and I am a fighter, but here is a fellow
 Who could both write and fight, and in both was equally
 skilful !"

Straightway answered and spake John Alden, the comely,
the youthful:

"Yes, he was equally skilled, as you say, with his pen
and his weapons. 95

Somewhere have I read, but where I forget, he could
dictate

Seven letters at once, at the same time writing his
memoirs."

"Truly," continued the Captain, not heeding or hear-
ing the other,

"Truly a wonderful man was Caius Julius Cæsar°!

Better be first, he said, in a little Iberian village, 100
Than be second in Rome, and I think he was right when
he said it.

Twice was he married before he was twenty, and many
times after;

Battles five hundred he fought, and a thousand cities
he conquered;

He, too, fought in Flanders, as he himself has recorded;
Finally he was stabbed by his friend, the orator Bru-
tus! 105

Now, do you know what he did on a certain occasion in
Flanders,

When the rear-guard of his army retreated, the front
giving way too,

And the immortal Twelfth Legion was crowded so closely
together

There was no room for their swords? Why, he seized
a shield from a soldier,

Put himself straight at the head of his troops, and com-
manded the captains, 110

Calling on each by his name, to order forward the en-
signs;

Then to widen the ranks, and give more room for their
weapons;
So he won the day, the battle of something-or-other.
That's what I always say; if you wish a thing to be well
done,
You must do it yourself, you must not leave it to
others!"

115

All was silent again; the Captain continued his reading.
Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying pen
of the stripling
Writing epistles important to go next day by the May-
flower,
Filled with the name and the fame of the Puritan
maiden Priscilla;
Every sentence began or closed with the name of Priscilla,
Till the treacherous pen, to which he confided the secret,
Strove to betray it by singing and shouting the name of
Priscilla!
Finally closing his book, with a bang of the ponderous
cover,
Sudden and loud as the sound of a soldier grounding his
musket,
Thus to the young man spake Miles Standish the Captain of Plymouth:
"When you have finished your work, I have something
important to tell you.
Be not however in haste; I can wait; I shall not be impatient!"
Straightway Alden replied, as he folded the last of his
letters,

120

125

Pushing his papers aside, and giving respectful attention:

"Speak; for whenever you speak, I am always ready to listen, 130

Always ready to hear whatever pertains to Miles Standish."

Thereupon answered the Captain, embarrassed, and culling his phrases:

"'Tis not good for a man to be alone, say the Scriptures.^o
This I have said before, and again and again I repeat it;

Every hour in the day, I think it, and feel it, and say it.
Since Rose Standish died, my life has been weary and dreary; 136

Sick at heart have I been, beyond the healing of friendship.

(Oft in my lonely hours have I thought of the maiden Priscilla.

She is alone in the world; her father and mother and brother^o

Died in the winter together; I saw her going and coming, 140

Now to the grave of the dead, and now to the bed of the dying,

Patient, courageous, and strong, and said to myself, that if ever

There were angels on earth, as there are angels in heaven,
Two have I seen and known; and the angel whose name is Priscilla

Holds in my desolate life the place which the other abandoned. 145

Long have I cherished the thought, but never have dared to reveal it,

Being a coward in this, though valiant enough for the
most part.

Go to the damsel Priscilla, the loveliest maiden of Plym-
outh,

Say that a blunt old Captain, a man not of words but
of actions,

Offers his hand and his heart, the hand and heart of a
soldier.

Not in these words, you know, but this in short is my
meaning;

I am a maker of war, and not a maker of phrases.

You, who are bred as a scholar, can say it in elegant
language,

Such as you read in your books of the pleadings and
wooings of lovers,

Such as you think best adapted to win the heart of a
maiden."

155

When he had spoken, John Alden, the fair-haired,
taciturn stripling,

All aghast at his words, surprised, embarrassed, bewil-
dered,

Trying to mask his dismay by treating the subject with
lightness,

Trying to smile, and yet feeling his heart stand still in
his bosom,

Just as a timepiece stops in a house that is stricken by
lightning,

160

Thus made answer and spake, or rather stammered than
answered:

"Such a message as that, I am sure I should mangle and
mar it;

If you would have it well done, — I am only repeating
your maxim, —

You must do it yourself, you must not leave it to others !”
But with the air of a man whom nothing can turn from
his purpose, 165

Gravely shaking his head, made answer the Captain of
Plymouth:

“Truly the maxim is good, and I do not mean to gain-
say it;

But we must use it discreetly, and not waste powder for
nothing.

Now, as I said before, I was never a maker of phrases.
I can march up to a fortress and summon the place to
surrender, 170

But march up to a woman with such a proposal, I dare not.
I’m not afraid of bullets, nor shot from the mouth of a
cannon,

But of a thundering ‘No!’ point-blank from the mouth
of a woman,

That I confess I’m afraid of, nor am I ashamed to con-
fess it!

So you must grant my request, for you are an elegant
scholar, 175

Having the graces of speech, and skill in the turning of
phrases.”

Taking the hand of his friend, who still was reluctant
and doubtful,

Holding it long in his own, and pressing it kindly, he
added:

“Though I have spoken thus lightly, yet deep is the feel-
ing that prompts me;

Surely you cannot refuse what I ask in the name of our
friendship !” 180

Then made answer John Alden: “The name of friend-
ship is sacred;

What you demand in that name, I have not the power to
 deny you !”
 So the strong will prevailed, subduing and moulding the
 gentler,
 Friendship prevailed over love, and Alden went on his
 errand.

III

THE LOVER'S ERRAND

So the strong will prevailed, and Alden went on his
 errand, 185
 Out of the street of the village, and into the paths of
 the forest,
 Into the tranquil woods, where bluebirds and robins
 were building
 Towns in the populous trees, with hanging gardens of
 verdure,
 Peaceful, aerial cities of joy and affection and freedom.
 All around him was calm, but within him commotion
 and conflict, 190
 Love contending with friendship, and self with each
 generous impulse.
 To and fro in his breast his thoughts were heaving and
 dashing,
 As in a foundering ship, with every roll of the vessel,
 Washes the bitter sea, the merciless surge of the ocean !
 “Must I relinquish it all,” he cried with a wild lamen-
 tation, 195
 “Must I relinquish it all, the joy, the hope, the illusion ?
 Was it for this I have loved, and waited, and worshipped
 in silence ?

Was it for this I have followed the flying feet and the shadow

Over the wintry sea, to the desolate shores of New England?

Truly the heart is deceitful, and out of its depths of corruption

200

Rise, like an exhalation, the misty phantoms of passion;
Angels of light they seem, but are only delusions of Satan.

All is clear to me now; I feel it, I see it distinctly!

This is the hand of the Lord; it is laid upon me in anger,
For I have followed too much the heart's desires and devices,

205

Worshipping Astaroth° blindly, and impious idols of Baal.°

This is the cross I must bear; the sin and the swift retribution."

So through the Plymouth woods John Alden went on his errand;

Crossing the brook at the ford, where it brawled over pebble and shallow,

Gathering still as he went, the Mayflowers° blooming around him,

210

Fragrant, filling the air with a strange and wonderful sweetness,

Children lost in the woods, and covered with leaves in their slumber.°

"Puritan flowers," he said, "and the type of Puritan maidens,

Modest and simple and sweet, the very type of Priscilla!
So I will take them to her; to Priscilla the Mayflower of Plymouth,

215

Modest and simple and sweet, as a parting gift will I
take them;

Breathing their silent farewells, as they fade and wither
and perish,

Soon to be thrown away as is the heart of the giver."

So through the Plymouth woods John Alden went on his
errand;

Came to an open space, and saw the disk of the ocean, ²²⁰
Sailless, sombre and cold with the comfortless breath of
the east-wind;

Saw the new-built house, and people at work in a meadow;
Heard, as he drew near the door, the musical voice of
Priscilla

Singing the hundredth Psalm, the grand old Puritan
anthem,^o

Music that Luther^o sang to the sacred words of the
Psalmist, ²²⁵

Full of the breath of the Lord, consoling and comfort-
ing many.

Then, as he opened the door, he beheld the form of the
maiden

Seated beside her wheel, and the carded wool like a
snow-drift

Piled at her knee, her white hands feeding the raven-
ous spindle,

While with her foot on the treadle she guided the wheel
in its motion. ²³⁰

Open wide on her lap lay the well-worn psalm-book of
Ainsworth,^o

Printed in Amsterdam, the words and the music to-
gether,

Rough-hewn, angular notes, like stones in the wall of
a churchyard,

Darkened and overhung by the running vine of the
verses.

Such was the book from whose pages she sang the old
Puritan anthem, 235

She, the Puritan girl, in the solitude of the forest,
Making the humble house and the modest apparel of
homespun

Beautiful with her beauty, and rich with the wealth of
her being !

Over him rushed, like a wind that is keen and cold
and relentless,

Thoughts of what might have been, and the weight and
woe of his errand ; 240

All the dreams that had faded, and all the hopes that had
vanished,

All his life henceforth a dreary and tenantless mansion,
Haunted by vain regrets, and pallid, sorrowful faces.

Still he said to himself, and almost fiercely he said it,
“ Let not him that putteth his hand to the plough look
backwards° ; 245

Though the ploughshare cut through the flowers of life
to its fountains,

Though it pass o’er the graves of the dead and the hearts
of the living,

It is the will of the Lord ; and his mercy endureth for-
ever !”

So he entered the house ; and the hum of the wheel
and the singing

Suddenly ceased ; for Priscilla, aroused by his step on
the threshold, 250

Rose as he entered and gave him her hand, in signal of
welcome,

Modest and simple and sweet, as a parting gift will I
take them;

Breathing their silent farewells, as they fade and wither
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of the living,

It is the will of the Lord; and his mercy endureth for-
ever!”

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and the singing

Suddenly ceased; for Priscilla, aroused by his step on
the threshold, 250

Rose as he entered and gave him her hand, in signal of
welcome,

Saying, "I knew it was you, when I heard your step in
the passage;
For I was thinking of you, as I sat there singing and
spinning."

Awkward and dumb with delight, that a thought of him
had been mingled

Thus in the sacred psalm, that came from the heart of
the maiden,

Silent before her he stood, and gave her the flowers for
an answer,

Finding no words for his thought. He remembered
that day in the winter,

After the first great snow, when he broke a path from
the village,

Reeling and plunging along through the drifts that en-
cumbered the doorway,

Stamping the snow from his feet as he entered the house,
and Priscilla

Laughed at his snowy locks, and gave him a seat by the
fireside,

Grateful and pleased to know he had thought of her in
the snow-storm.

Had he but spoken then! perhaps not in vain had he
spoken;

Now it was all too late; the golden moment had van-
ished!

So he stood there abashed, and gave her the flowers for
an answer.

Then they sat down and talked of the birds and the
beautiful Spring-time;

Talked of their friends at home, and the Mayflower that
sailed on the morrow.

"I have been thinking all day," said gently the Puritan maiden,

"Dreaming all night, and thinking all day, of the hedgerows of England, —^o

They are in blossom now, and the country is all like a garden; 270

Thinking of lanes and fields, and the song of the lark and the linnet,

Seeing the village street, and familiar faces of neighbors
Going about as of old, and stopping to gossip together,
And, at the end of the street, the village church, with the ivy

Climbing the old gray tower, and the quiet graves in the churchyard. 275

Kind are the people I live with, and dear to me my religion;
Still my heart is so sad, that I wish myself back in Old England.

You will say it is wrong, but I cannot help it: I almost
Wish myself back in Old England, I feel so lonely and wretched."

Thereupon answered the youth: "Indeed I do not condemn you; 280

Stouter hearts than a woman's have quailed in this terrible winter.

Yours is tender and trusting, and needs a stronger to lean on;

So I have come to you now, with an offer and proffer of marriage

Made by a good man and true, Miles Standish the Captain of Plymouth!"

Thus he delivered his message, the dexterous writer of letters, — 285

Did not embellish the theme, nor array it in beautiful phrases,

But came straight to the point, and blurted it out like a school-boy;

Even the Captain himself could hardly have said it more bluntly.

Mute with amazement and sorrow, Priscilla the Puritan maiden

Looked into Alden's face, her eyes dilated with wonder, Feeling his words like a blow, that stunned her and rendered her speechless; 291

Till at length she exclaimed, interrupting the ominous silence:

"If the great Captain of Plymouth is so very eager to wed me,

Why does he not come himself, and take the trouble to woo me?

If I am not worth the wooing, I surely am not worth the winning!" 295

Then John Alden began explaining and smoothing the matter,

Making it worse as he went, by saying the Captain was busy, —

Had no time for such things; — such things! the words grating harshly

Fell on the ear of Priscilla; and swift as a flash she made answer:

"Has he no time for such things, as you call it, before he is married, 300

Would he be likely to find it, or make it, after the wedding?

That is the way with you men; you don't understand us, you cannot.

When you have made up your minds, after thinking
of this one and that one,
Choosing, selecting, rejecting, comparing one with
another,
Then you make known your desire, with abrupt and
sudden avowal, 305
And are offended and hurt, and indignant perhaps,
that a woman
Does not respond at once to a love that she never sus-
pected,
Does not attain at a bound the height to which you
have been climbing.
This is not right nor just; for surely a woman's affec-
tion
Is not a thing to be asked for, and had for only the
asking. 310
When one is truly in love, one not only says it, but
shows it.
Had he but waited awhile, had he only showed that
he loved me,
Even this Captain of yours — who knows? — at last
might have won me,
Old and rough as he is; but now it never can hap-
pen."

Still John Alden went on, unheeding the words of
Priscilla, 315
Urging the suit of his friend, explaining, persuading,
expanding;
Spoke of his courage and skill, and of all his battles
in Flanders,
How with the people of God he had chosen to suffer
affliction,

How, in return for his zeal, they had made him Captain of Plymouth;

He was a gentleman born, could trace his pedigree plainly

Back to Hugh Standish of Duxbury Hall, in Lancashire, England,³²⁰

Who was the son of Ralph, and the grandson of Thurston de Standish;

Heir unto vast estates, of which he was basely defrauded, Still bore the family arms, and had for his crest a cock argent^o

Combed and wattled gules,^o and all the rest of the blazon.

He was a man of honor, of noble and generous nature; Though he was rough, he was kindly; she knew how during the winter

He had attended the sick, with a hand as gentle as woman's;

Somewhat hasty and hot, he could not deny it, and headstrong,

Stern as a soldier might be, but hearty, and placable always,

Not to be laughed at and scorned, because he was little of stature;

For he was great of heart, magnanimous, courtly, courageous;

Any woman in Plymouth, nay, any woman in England, Might be happy and proud to be called the wife of Miles Standish!

But as he warmed and glowed, in his simple and eloquent language,

Quite forgetful of self, and full of the praise of his rival,

Archly the maiden smiled, and, with eyes overrunning
with laughter,
Said, in a tremulous voice, "Why don't you speak for
yourself, John?"

IV

JOHN ALDEN

INTO the open air John Alden, perplexed and bewil-
dered,
Rushed like a man insane, and wandered alone by the
sea-side; 340
Paced up and down the sands, and bared his head to
the east-wind,
Cooling his heated brow, and the fire and fever within
him.
Slowly, as out of the heavens, with apocalyptical splen-
dors,^o
Sank the City of God, in the vision of John the Apostle,
So, with its cloudy walls of chrysolite, jasper, and
sapphire, 345
Sank the broad red sun, and over its turrets uplifted
Glimmered the golden reed of the angel who measured
the city.

"Welcome, O wind of the East!" he exclaimed in
his wild exultation,
"Welcome, O wind of the East, from the caves of the
misty Atlantic!
Blowing o'er fields of dulse,^o and measureless meadows
of sea-grass, 350

Blowing o'er rocky wastes, and the grottoes and gardens
of ocean!
Lay thy cold, moist hand on my burning forehead,
and wrap me
Close in thy garments of mist, to allay the fever within
me!"

Like an awakened conscience, the sea was moaning
and tossing,
Beating remorseful and loud the mutable sands of the
sea-shore. 355
Fierce in his soul was the struggle and tumult of passions
contending;
Love triumphant and crowned, and friendship wounded
and bleeding,
Passionate cries of desire, and importunate pleadings
of duty!
"Is it my fault," he said, "that the maiden has chosen
between us?
Is it my fault that he failed, — my fault that I am the
victor?" 360
Then within him there thundered a voice, like the voice
of the Prophet:
"It hath displeased the Lord!" — and he thought of
David's transgression,^o
Bathsheba's beautiful face, and his friend in the front
of the battle!
Shame and confusion of guilt, and abasement and self-
condemnation,
Overwhelmed him at once; and he cried in the deepest
contrition: 365
"It hath displeased the Lord! It is the temptation
of Satan!"

Then, uplifting his head, he looked at the sea, and
beheld there

Dimly the shadowy form of the Mayflower riding at
anchor,

Rocked on the rising tide, and ready to sail on the
morrow;

Heard the voices of men through the mist, the rattle
of cordage

Thrown on the deck, the shouts of the mate, and the
sailors' "Ay, ay, Sir!"

Clear and distinct, but not loud, in the dripping air of
the twilight.

Still for a moment he stood, and listened, and stared
at the vessel,

Then went hurriedly on, as one who, seeing a phantom,
Stops, then quickens his pace, and follows the beckon-
ing shadow.

"Yes, it is plain to me now," he murmured; "the
hand of the Lord is

Leading me out of the land of darkness, the bondage
of error,

Through the sea, that shall lift the walls of its waters
around me,

Hiding me, cutting me off, from the cruel thoughts
that pursue me.

Back will I go o'er the ocean, this dreary land will
abandon,

Her whom I may not love, and him whom my heart
has offended.

Better to be in my grave in the green old churchyard
in England.

Close by my mother's side, and among the dust of my
kindred;

Better be dead and forgotten, than living in shame and dishonor!

Sacred and safe and unseen, in the dark of the narrow chamber

With me my secret shall lie, like a buried jewel that glimmers

Bright on the hand that is dust, in the chambers of silence and darkness, —

Yes, as the marriage ring of the great espousal hereafter!"

Thus as he spake, he turned, in the strength of his strong resolution,

Leaving behind him the shore, and hurried along in the twilight,

Through the congenial gloom of the forest silent and sombre,

Till he beheld the lights in the seven houses of Plymouth,

Shining like seven stars in the dusk and mist of the evening.

Soon he entered his door, and found the redoubtable Captain

Sitting alone, and absorbed in the martial pages of Cæsar,

Fighting some great campaign in Hainault or Brabant or Flanders.

"Long have you been on your errand," he said with a cheery demeanor,

Even as one who is waiting an answer, and fears not the issue.

"Not far off is the house, although the woods are between us;

But you have lingered so long, that while you were going and coming

I have fought ten battles and sacked and demolished a city.

Come, sit down, and in order relate to me all that has happened."

Then John Alden spake, and related the wondrous adventure

From beginning to end, minutely, just as it happened;
How he had seen Priscilla, and how he had sped in his
courtship,

405

Only smoothing a little, and softening down her refusal.
But when he came at length to the words Priscilla had
spoken,

Words so tender and cruel, "Why don't you speak
for yourself, John?"

Up leaped the Captain of Plymouth, and stamped on
the floor, till his armor

Clanged on the wall, where it hung, with a sound of
sinister omen.

410

All his pent-up wrath burst forth in a sudden explosion,

E'en as a hand-grenade, that scatters destruction
around it.

Wildly he shouted, and loud: "John Alden! you have
betrayed me!

Me, Miles Standish, your friend! have supplanted,
defrauded, betrayed me!

One of my ancestors ran his sword through the heart
of Wat Tyler°;

415

Who shall prevent me from running my own through
the heart of a traitor?

Yours is the greater treason, for yours is a treason to
friendship!

You, who lived under my roof, whom I cherished and
loved as a brother;
You, who have fed at my board, and drunk at my cup,
to whose keeping
I have intrusted my honor, my thoughts the most
sacred and secret, — 420
You too, Brutus! ah, woe to the name of friendship
hereafter!
Brutus was Cæsar's friend, and you were mine, but
henceforward
Let there be nothing between us save war, and impla-
cable hatred!"

So spake the Captain of Plymouth, and strode about
in the chamber,
Chafing and choking with rage; like cords were the
veins on his temples. 425
But in the midst of his anger a man appeared at the
doorway,
Bringing in uttermost haste a message of urgent im-
portance,
Rumors of danger and war and hostile incursions of
Indians!
Straightway the Captain paused, and, without further
question or parley,
Took from the nail on the wall his sword with its scab-
bard of iron, 430
Buckled the belt round his waist, and, frowning fiercely;
departed.
Alden was left alone. He heard the clank of the scab-
bard
Growing fainter and fainter, and dying away in the
distance.

Then he arose from his seat, and looked forth into the
darkness,
Felt the cool air blow on his cheek, that was hot with
the insult,
Lifted his eyes to the heavens, and, folding his hands ⁴³⁵
as in childhood,
Prayed in the silence of night to the Father who seeth
in secret.

Meanwhile the choleric Captain strode wrathful
away to the council,
Found it already assembled, impatiently waiting his
coming;
Men in the middle of life, austere and grave in deport-
ment, ⁴⁴⁰
Only one of them old, the hill that was nearest to
heaven,
Covered with snow, but erect, the excellent Elder of
Plymouth.^o
God had sifted three kingdoms to find the wheat for
this planting,
Then had sifted the wheat, as the living seed of a
nation;
So say the chronicles old, and such is the faith of the
people! ⁴⁴⁵
Near them was standing an Indian, in attitude stern
and defiant,
Naked down to the waist, and grim and ferocious in
aspect;
While on the table before them was lying unopened a
Bible,^o
Ponderous, bound in leather, brass-studded, printed in
Holland,

And beside it outstretched the skin of a rattlesnake^o
glittered, 450
Filled, like a quiver, with arrows: a signal and chal-
lenge of warfare,
Brought by the Indian, and speaking with arrowy
tongues of defiance.
This Miles Standish beheld, as he entered, and heard
them debating
What were an answer befitting the hostile message
and menace,
Talking of this and of that, contriving, suggesting,
objecting; 455
One voice only for peace, and that the voice of the
Elder,
Judging it wise and well that some at least were con-
verted,
Rather than any were slain, for this was but Christian
behavior!
Then out spake Miles Standish, the stalwart Captain
of Plymouth,
Muttering deep in his throat, for his voice was husky
with anger, 460
“What! do you mean to make war with milk and the
water of roses?
Is it to shoot red squirrels you have your howitzer
planted
There on the roof of the church, or is it to shoot red
devils?
Truly the only tongue that is understood by a savage
Must be the tongue of fire that speaks from the mouth
of the cannon!” 465
Thereupon answered and said the excellent Elder of
Plymouth,

Somewhat amazed and alarmed at this irreverent language:

“Not so thought Saint Paul, nor yet the other Apostles;

Not from the cannon’s mouth were the tongues of fire they spake with!”

But unheeded fell this mild rebuke on the Captain, ⁴⁷⁰
Who had advanced to the table, and thus continued discoursing:

“Leave this matter to me, for to me by right it pertaineth.

War is a terrible trade; but in the cause that is righteous,

Sweet is the smell of powder; and thus I answer the challenge!”

Then from the rattlesnake’s skin, with a sudden, contemptuous gesture, ⁴⁷⁵

Jerking the Indian arrows, he filled it with powder and bullets

Full to the very jaws, and handed it back to the savage, Saying, in thundering tones: “Here, take it! this is your answer!”

Silently out of the room then glided the glistening savage,

Bearing the serpent’s skin, and seeming himself like a serpent, ⁴⁸⁰

Winding his sinuous way in the dark to the depths of the forest.

V

THE SAILING OF THE MAYFLOWER

JUST in the gray of the dawn, as the mists uprose
from the meadows,
There was a stir and a sound in the slumbering village
of Plymouth;
Clanging and clicking of arms, and the order impera-
tive, "Forward!"
Given in tone suppressed, a tramp of feet, and then
silence. 485
Figures ten, in the mist, marched slowly out of the
village.^o
Standish the stalwart it was, with eight of his valorous
army,
Led by their Indian guide, by Hobomok, friend of the
white men,
Northward marching to quell the sudden revolt of the
savage.
Giants they seemed in the mist, or the mighty men of
King David; 490
Giants in heart they were, who believed in God and the
Bible, —
Ay, who believed in the smiting of Midianites and
Philistines.
Over them gleamed far off the crimson banners of morn-
ing;
Under them loud on the sands, the serried billows, ad-
vancing,
Fired along the line, and in regular order retreated. 495

Many a mile had they marched, when at length the
village of Plymouth
Woke from its sleep, and arose, intent on its manifold
labors.
Sweet was the air and soft; and slowly the smoke
from the chimneys
Rose over roofs of thatch, and pointed steadily eastward;
Men came forth from the doors, and paused and talked
of the weather,
Said that the wind had changed, and was blowing fair⁵⁰⁰
for the Mayflower;
Talked of their Captain's departure, and all the dangers
that menaced,
He being gone, the town, and what should be done in
his absence.
Merrily sang the birds, and the tender voices of women
Consecrated with hymns the common cares of the
household.
Out of the sea rose the sun, and the billows rejoiced⁵⁰⁵
at his coming;
Beautiful were his feet on the purple tops of the moun-
tains;
Beautiful on the sails of the Mayflower riding at anchor,
Battered and blackened and worn by all the storms of
the winter.
Loosely against her masts was hanging and flapping
her canvas,
Rent by so many gales, and patched by the hands of⁵¹⁰
the sailors.
Suddenly from her side, as the sun rose over the ocean,
Darted a puff of smoke, and floated seaward; anon rang
Loud over field and forest the cannon's roar, and the
echoes

Heard and repeated the sound, the signal-gun of departure!⁵¹⁵

Ah! but with louder echoes replied the hearts of the people!

Meekly, in voices subdued, the chapter was read from the Bible,

Meekly the prayer was begun, but ended in fervent entreaty!

Then from their houses in haste came forth the Pilgrims of Plymouth,

Men and women and children, all hurrying down to the sea-shore,⁵²⁰

Eager, with tearful eyes, to say farewell to the Mayflower,

Homeward bound o'er the sea, and leaving them here in the desert.

Foremost among them was Alden. All night he had lain without slumber,
Turning and tossing about in the heat and unrest of his fever.

He had beheld Miles Standish, who came back late from the council,⁵²⁵

Stalking into the room, and heard him mutter and murmur,

Sometimes it seemed a prayer, and sometimes it sounded like swearing.

Once he had come to the bed, and stood there a moment in silence;

Then he had turned away, and said: "I will not awake him;

Let him sleep on, it is best; for what is the use of more talking!"⁵³⁰

Then he extinguished the light, and threw himself down
on his pallet,
Dressed as he was, and ready to start at the break of the
morning, —
Covered himself with the cloak he had worn in his cam-
paigns in Flanders, —
Slept as a soldier sleeps in his bivouac, ready for action.
But with the dawn he arose; in the twilight Alden be-
held him
Put on his corselet of steel, and all the rest of his armor,
Buckle about his waist his trusty blade of Damascus,
Take from the corner his musket, and so stride out of the
chamber.
Often the heart of the youth had burned and yearned to
embrace him,
Often his lips had essayed to speak, imploring for par-
don,
All the old friendship came back with its tender and
grateful emotions;
But his pride overmastered the nobler nature within
him, —
Pride, and the sense of his wrong, and the burning fire
of the insult.
So he beheld his friend departing in anger, but spake
not,
Saw him go forth to danger, perhaps to death, and he
spake not!
Then he arose from his bed, and heard what the people
were saying,
Joined in the talk at the door, with Stephen and Richard
and Gilbert,
Joined in the morning prayer, and in the reading of
Scripture,

And, with the others, in haste went hurrying down to
the sea-shore,
Down to the Plymouth Rock, that had been to their
feet as a doorstep 550
Into a world unknown, — the corner-stone of a nation!

There with his boat was the Master,° already a little
impatient
Lest he should lose the tide, or the wind might shift to
the eastward,
Square-built, hearty, and strong, with an odor of ocean
about him,
Speaking with this one and that, and cramming letters
and parcels 555
Into his pockets capacious, and messages mingled to-
gether
Into his narrow brain, till at last he was wholly bewildered.
Nearer the boat stood Alden, with one foot placed on
the gunwale,°
One still firm on the rock, and talking at times with the
sailors,
Seated erect on the thwarts,° all ready and eager for start-
ing. 560
He too was eager to go, and thus put an end to his
anguish,
Thinking to fly from despair, that swifter than keel is
or canvas,
Thinking to drown in the sea the ghost that would rise
and pursue him.
But as he gazed on the crowd, he beheld the form of
Priscilla
Standing dejected among them, unconscious of all that
was passing. 565

Fixed were her eyes upon his, as if she divined his intention,
Fixed with a look so sad, so reproachful, imploring, and patient,
That with a sudden revulsion his heart recoiled from its purpose,
As from the verge of a crag, where one step more is destruction.
Strange is the heart of man, with its quick, mysterious instincts ! 570
Strange is the life of man, and fatal or fated are moments,
Whereupon turn, as on hinges, the gates of the wall adamantine !
“Here I remain !” he exclaimed, as he looked at the heavens above him,
Thanking the Lord whose breath had scattered the mist and the madness,
Wherein, blind and lost, to death he was staggering headlong. 575
“Yonder snow-white cloud, that floats in the ether above me,
Seems like a hand that is pointing and beckoning over the ocean.
There is another hand, that is not so spectral and ghost-like,
Holding me, drawing me back, and clasping mine for protection.
Float, O hand of cloud, and vanish away in the ether ! 580
Roll thyself up like a fist, to threaten and daunt me ; I heed not
Either your warning or menace, or any omen of evil !
There is no land so sacred, no air so pure and so wholesome,

As is the air she breathes, and the soil that is pressed by
her footsteps.

Here for her sake will I stay, and like an invisible pres-
ence

Hover around her forever, protecting, supporting her
weakness;

Yes! as my foot was the first that stepped on this rock
at the landing,

So, with the blessing of God, shall it be the last at the
leaving!"

Meanwhile the Master alert, but with dignified air and
important,

Scanning with watchful eye the tide and the wind and
the weather,

Walked about on the sands, and the people crowded
around him

Saying a few last words, and enforcing his careful re-
membrance.

Then, taking each by the hand, as if he were grasping a
tiller,

Into the boat he sprang, and in haste shoved off to his
vessel,

Glad in his heart to get rid of all this worry and flurry, 595
Glad to be gone from a land of sand and sickness and
sorrow,

Short allowance of victual, and plenty of nothing but
Gospel!

Lost in the sound of the oars was the last farewell of the
Pilgrims.

O strong hearts and true! not one went back in the
Mayflower°!

No, not one looked back, who had set his hand to this
ploughing!

Soon were heard on board the shouts and songs of the
sailors
Heaving the windlass round, and hoisting the ponderous
anchor.
Then the yards were braced, and all sails set to the west-
wind,
Blowing steady and strong; and the Mayflower sailed
from the harbor,
Rounded the point of the Gurnet, and leaving far to the
southward 605
Island and cape of sand, and the Field of the First En-
counter,^o
Took the wind on her quarter, and stood for the open
Atlantic,
Borne on the send of the sea, and the swelling hearts of
the Pilgrims.

Long in silence they watched the receding sail of the
vessel,
Much endeared to them all, as something living and
human; 610
Then, as if filled with the spirit, and wrapt in a vision
prophetic,
Baring his hoary head, the excellent Elder of Plym-
outh
Said, "Let us pray!" and they prayed, and thanked
the Lord and took courage.
Mournfully sobbed the waves at the base of the rock,
and above them
Bowed and whispered the wheat on the hill of death,
and their kindred 615
Seemed to awake in their graves, and to join in the prayer
that they uttered.

Sun-illumin'd and white, on the eastern verge of the
ocean
Gleam'd the departing sail, like a marble slab in a grave-
yard;
Buried beneath it lay forever all hope of escaping.
Lo! as they turned to depart, they saw the form of an
Indian, 620
Watching them from the hill; but while they spake with
each other,
Pointing with outstretched hands, and saying, "Look!"
he had vanished.
So they returned to their homes; but Alden linger'd a
little,
Musing alone on the shore, and watching the wash of
the billows
Round the base of the rock, and the sparkle and flash
of the sunshine, 625
Like the spirit of God, moving visibly over the waters.

VI

PRISCILLA

THUS for a while he stood, and mused by the shore of
the ocean,
Thinking of many things, and most of all of Priscilla;
And as if thought had the power to draw to itself, like
the loadstone,
Whatsoever it touches, by subtile laws of its nature, 630
Lo! as he turned to depart, Priscilla was standing be-
side him.

"Are you so much offended, you will not speak to me?" said she.

"Am I so much to blame, that yesterday, when you were pleading

Warmly the cause of another, my heart, impulsive and wayward,

Pleaded your own, and spake out, forgetful perhaps of decorum? 635

Certainly you can forgive me for speaking so frankly, for saying

What I ought not to have said, yet now I can never unsay it;

For there are moments in life, when the heart is so full of emotion,

That if by chance it be shaken, or into its depths like a pebble

Drops some careless word, it overflows, and its secret, 640

Spilt on the ground like water, can never be gathered together.

Yesterday I was shocked, when I heard you speak of Miles Standish,

Praising his virtues, transforming his very defects into virtues,

Praising his courage and strength, and even his fighting in Flanders,

As if by fighting alone you could win the heart of a woman, 645

Quite overlooking yourself and the rest, in exalting your hero.

Therefore I spake as I did, by an irresistible impulse.

You will forgive me, I hope, for the sake of the friendship between us,

Which is too true and too sacred to be so easily broken !”
Thereupon answered John Alden, the scholar, the friend
of Miles Standish :

“I was not angry with you, with myself alone I was
angry,
Seeing how badly I managed the matter I had in my
keeping.”

“No !” interrupted the maiden, with answer prompt and
decisive ;

“No ; you were angry with me, for speaking so frankly
and freely.

It was wrong, I acknowledge ; for it is the fate of a
woman

Long to be patient and silent, to wait like a ghost that
is speechless,

Till some questioning voice dissolves the spell of its si-
lence.

Hence is the inner life of so many suffering women
Sunless and silent and deep, like subterranean rivers
Running through caverns of darkness, unheard, unseen,
and unfruitful,

Chafing their channels of stone, with endless and profit-
less murmurs.”

Thereupon answered John Alden, the young man, the
lover of women :

“Heaven forbid it, Priscilla ; and truly they seem to me
always

More like the beautiful rivers that watered the garden
of Eden,°

More like the river Euphrates, through deserts of Havi-
lah flowing,

Filling the land with delight, and memories sweet of the
garden !”

"Ah, by these words, I can see," again interrupted the maiden,

"How very little you prize me, or care for what I am saying.

When from the depths of my heart, in pain and with secret misgiving,

Frankly I speak to you, asking for sympathy only and kindness,

Straightway you take up my words, that are plain and direct and in earnest,

Turn them away from their meaning, and answer with flattering phrases.

This is not right, is not just, is not true to the best that is in you;

For I know and esteem you, and feel that your nature is noble,

Lifting mine up to a higher, a more ethereal level. 675

Therefore I value your friendship, and feel it perhaps the more keenly

If you say aught that implies I am only as one among many,

If you make use of those common and complimentary phrases

Most men think so fine, in dealing and speaking with women,

But which women reject as insipid, if not as insulting." 680

Mute and amazed was Alden; and listened and looked at Priscilla,

Thinking he never had seen her more fair, more divine in her beauty.

He who but yesterday pleaded so glibly the cause of another,

Stood there embarrassed and silent, and seeking in vain
for an answer.

So the maiden went on, and little divined or imagined 685
What was at work in his heart, that made him so awkward and speechless.

“Let us, then, be what we are, and speak what we think,
and in all things

Keep ourselves loyal to truth, and the sacred professions of friendship.

It is no secret I tell you, nor am I ashamed to declare it:
I have liked to be with you, to see you, to speak with
you always. 690

So I was hurt at your words, and a little affronted to
hear you

Urge me to marry your friend, though he were the Captain Miles Standish.

For I must tell you the truth: much more to me is your
friendship

Than all the love he could give, were he twice the hero
you think him.”

Then she extended her hand, and Alden, who eagerly
grasped it, 695

Felt all the wounds in his heart, that were aching and
bleeding so sorely,

Healed by the touch of that hand, and he said, with a
voice full of feeling:

“Yes, we must ever be friends; and of all who offer you
friendship

Let me be ever the first, the truest, the nearest and
dearest!”

Casting a farewell look at the glimmering sail of the
Mayflower 700

Distant, but still in sight, and sinking below the horizon,

Homeward together they walked, with a strange, indefinite feeling,

That all the rest had departed and left them alone in the desert.

But, as they went through the fields in the blessing and smile of the sunshine,

Lighter grew their hearts, and Priscilla said very archly :

“Now that our terrible Captain has gone in pursuit of the Indians,

Where he is happier far than he would be commanding a household,

You may speak boldly, and tell me of all that happened between you,

When you returned last night, and said how ungrateful you found me.”

Thereupon answered John Alden, and told her the whole of the story, —

Told her his own despair, and the direful wrath of Miles Standish.

Whereat the maiden smiled, and said between laughing and earnest,

“He is a little chimney, and heated hot in a moment !”

But as he gently rebuked her, and told her how much he had suffered, —

How he had even determined to sail that day in the Mayflower,

And had remained for her sake, on hearing the dangers that threatened, —

All her manner was changed, and she said with a faltering accent,

“Truly I thank you for this: how good you have been to me always!”

Thus, as a pilgrim devout, who toward Jerusalem
journeys,
Taking three steps in advance, and one reluctantly back-
ward, 720
Urged by importunate zeal, and withheld by pangs of
contrition;
Slowly but steadily onward, receding yet ever advancing,
Journeyed this Puritan youth to the Holy Land of his
longings,
Urged by the fervor of love, and withheld by remorseful
misgivings.

VII

THE MARCH OF MILES STANDISH

MEANWHILE the stalwart Miles Standish was marching
steadily northward, 725
Winding through forest and swamp, and along the trend
of the sea-shore,
All day long, with hardly a halt, the fire of his anger
Burning and crackling within, and the sulphurous odor
of powder
Seeming more sweet to his nostrils than all the scents of
the forest.
Silent and moody he went, and much he revolved his
discomfort; 730
He who was used to success, and to easy victories always,

Thus to be flouted, rejected, and laughed to scorn by a
maiden,
Thus to be mocked and betrayed by the friend whom
most he had trusted !
Ah ! 'twas too much to be borne, and he fretted and
chafed in his armor !

"I alone am to blame," he muttered, "for mine was
the folly. 735
What has a rough old soldier, grown grim and gray in
the harness,
Used to the camp and its ways, to do with the wooing
of maidens ?
'Twas but a dream, — let it pass, — let it vanish like so
many others !
What I thought was a flower, is only a weed, and is
worthless ;
Out of my heart will I pluck it, and throw it away, and
henceforward 740
Be but a fighter of battles, a lover and wooer of dangers."
Thus he revolved in his mind his sorry defeat and dis-
comfort,
While he was marching by day or lying at night in the
forest,
Looking up at the trees and the constellations beyond
them.

After a three days' march he came to an Indian en-
campment^o 745
Pitched on the edge of a meadow, between the sea and
the forest ;
Women at work by the tents, and warriors, horrid with
war-paint,

Seated about a fire, and smoking and talking together;
Who, when they saw from afar the sudden approach of
the white men,
Saw the flash of the sun on breastplate and sabre and
musket, 750
Straightway leaped to their feet, and two, from among
them advancing,
Came to parley with Standish, and offer him furs as a
present;
Friendship was in their looks, but in their hearts there
was hatred.
Braves of the tribe were these, and brothers, gigantic in
stature,
Huge as Goliath of Gath, or the terrible Og, king of
Bashan°; 755
One was Pecksuot named, and the other was called Wat-
tawamat.°
Round their necks were suspended their knives in scab-
bards of wampum,
Two-edged, trenchant knives, with points as sharp as a
needle.
Other arms had they none, for they were cunning and
crafty.
“Welcome, English!” they said, — these words they had
learned from the traders 760
Touching at times on the coast, to barter and chaffer
for peltries.
Then in their native tongue they began to parley with
Standish,
Through his guide and interpreter, Hobomok, friend of
the white man,
Begging for blankets and knives, but mostly for muskets
and powder,

Kept by the white man, they said, concealed, with the
plague, in his cellars, 765

Ready to be let loose, and destroy his brother the red
man !

But when Standish refused, and said he would give them
the Bible,

Suddenly changing their tone, they began to boast and
to bluster.

Then Wattawamat advanced with a stride in front of
the other,

And, with a lofty demeanor, thus vauntingly spake to
the Captain: 770

“Now Wattawamat can see, by the fiery eyes of the
Captain,

Angry is he in his heart; but the heart of the brave
Wattawamat

Is not afraid at the sight. He was not born of a woman,
But on a mountain, at night, from an oak-tree riven
by lightning,

Forth he sprang at a bound, with all his weapons about
him, 775

Shouting, ‘Who is there here to fight with the brave
Wattawamat?’”

Then he unsheathed his knife, and, whetting the blade
on his left hand,

Held it aloft and displayed a woman’s face on the
handle,

Saying, with bitter expression and look of sinister
meaning:

“I have another at home, with the face of a man on the
handle; 780

By and by they shall marry; and there will be plenty
of children !”

Then stood Pecksuot forth, self-vaunting, insulting
Miles Standish;
While with his fingers he patted the knife that hung
at his bosom,
Drawing it half from its sheath, and plunging it back,
as he muttered,
"By and by it shall see; it shall eat; ah, ha! but
shall speak not! 785
This is the mighty Captain the white men have sent to
destroy us!
He is a little man; let him go and work with the
women!"

Meanwhile Standish had noted the faces and figures
of Indians
Peeping and creeping about from bush to tree in the
forest,
Feigning to look for game, with arrows set on their
bow-strings, 790
Drawing about him still closer and closer the net of
their ambush.
But undaunted he stood, and dissembled and treated
them smoothly;
So the old chronicles say, that were writ in the days
of the fathers.
But when he heard their defiance, the boast, the taunt
and the insult,
All the hot blood of his race, of Sir Hugh and of Thurs-
ton de Standish, 795
Boiled and beat in his heart, and swelled in the veins
of his temples.
Headlong he leaped on the boaster, and, snatching his
knife from its scabbard,

Plunged it into his heart, and, reeling backward, the
savage
Fell with his face to the sky, and a fiendlike fierceness
upon it.
Straight there arose from the forest the awful sound
of the war-whoop, 800
And, like a flurry of snow on the whistling wind of
December,
Swift and sudden and keen came a flight of feathery
arrows.
Then came a cloud of smoke, and out of the cloud
came the lightning,
Out of the lightning thunder; and death unseen ran
before it.
Frightened the savages fled for shelter in swamp and
in thicket, 805
Hotly pursued and beset; but their sachem, the brave
Wattawamat,
Fled not; he was dead. Unswerving and swift had a
bullet
Passed through his brain, and he fell with both hands
clutching the greensward,
Seeming in death to hold back from his foe the land of
his fathers.

There on the flowers of the meadow the warriors
lay, and above them, 810
Silent, with folded arms, stood Hobomok, friend of
the white man.
Smiling at length he exclaimed to the stalwart Captain
of Plymouth:
"Pecksuot bragged very loud, of his courage, his
strength and his stature, —

Mocked the great Captain, and called him a little man;
but I see now
Big enough have you been to lay him speechless before
you !”

815

Thus the first battle was fought and won by the
stalwart Miles Standish.
When the tidings thereof were brought to the village
of Plymouth,
And as a trophy of war the head of the brave Wat-
tawamat
Scowled from the roof of the fort, which at once was
a church and a fortress,
All who beheld it rejoiced, and praised the Lord, and
took courage.
Only Priscilla averted her face from this spectre of
terror,
Thanking God in her heart that she had not married
Miles Standish;
Shrinking, fearing almost, lest, coming home from his
battles,
He should lay claim to her hand, as the prize and re-
ward of his valor.

820

VIII

THE SPINNING WHEEL

MONTH after month passed away, and in autumn the
ships of the merchants^o
Came with kindred and friends, with cattle and corn
for the Pilgrims.

825

All in the village was peace; the men were intent on
their labors,
Busy with hewing and building, with garden-plot and
with merestead,
Busy with breaking the glebe, and mowing the grass
in the meadows,^o
Searching the sea for its fish, and hunting the deer in
the forest. 830
All in the village was peace; but at times the rumor
of warfare
Filled the air with alarm, and the apprehension of danger.
Bravely the stalwart Standish was scouring the land
with his forces,
Waxing valiant in fight and defeating the alien armies,
Till his name had become a sound of fear to the na-
tions. 835
Anger was still in his heart, but at times the remorse
and contrition
Which in all noble natures succeed the passionate out-
break,
Came like a rising tide, that encounters the rush of a
river,
Staying its current awhile, but making it bitter and
brackish.

Meanwhile Alden at home had built him a new
habitation,^o 840
Solid, substantial, of timber rough-hewn from the firs
of the forest.
Wooden-barred was the door, and the roof was covered
with rushes;
Latticed the windows were, and the window-panes were
of paper,

"You are the beautiful Bertha, the spinner, the queen
of Helvetia;

She whose story I read at a stall in the streets of
Southampton,

Who, as she rode on her palfrey, o'er valley and meadow
and mountain,

Ever was spinning her thread from a distaff fixed to
her saddle.

She was so thrifty and good, that her name passed
into a proverb. 880

So shall it be with your own, when the spinning-wheel
shall no longer

Hum in the house of the farmer, and fill its chambers
with music.

Then shall the mothers, reproving, relate how it was
in their childhood,

Praising the good old times, and the days of Priscilla
the spinner!"

Straight uprose from her wheel the beautiful Puritan
maiden, 885

Pleased with the praise of her thrift from him whose
praise was the sweetest,

Drew from the reel on the table a snowy skein of her
spinning,

Thus making answer, meanwhile, to the flattering
phrases of Alden:

"Come, you must not be idle; if I am a pattern for
housewives,

Show yourself equally worthy of being the model of
husbands. 890

Hold this skein on your hands, while I wind it, ready
for knitting;

Then who knows but hereafter, when fashions have
changed and the manners,

Fathers may talk to their sons of the good old times
of John Alden !”

Thus, with a jest and a laugh, the skein on his hands
she adjusted,

He sitting awkwardly there, with his arms extended
before him, 895

She standing graceful, erect, and winding the thread
from his fingers,

Sometimes chiding a little his clumsy manner of hold-
ing,

Sometimes touching his hands, as she disentangled
expertly

Twist or knot in the yarn, unawares — for how could
she help it? —

Sending electrical thrills through every nerve in his
body. 900

Lo ! in the midst of this scene, a breathless messen-
ger entered,

Bringing in hurry and heat the terrible news from the
village.

Yes ; Miles Standish was dead ! — an Indian had brought
them the tidings, —

Slain by a poisoned arrow, shot down in the front of
the battle,

Into an ambush beguiled, cut off with the whole of his
forces ; 905

All the town would be burned, and all the people be
murdered !

Such were the tidings of evil that burst on the hearts
of the hearers.

Silent and statue-like stood Priscilla, her face looking
backward

Still at the face of the speaker, her arms uplifted in
horror;
But John Alden, upstarting, as if the barb of the ar-
row 910
Piercing the heart of his friend had struck his own,
and had sundered
Once and forever the bonds that held him bound as a
captive,
Wild with excess of sensation, the awful delight of
his freedom,
Mingled with pain and regret, unconscious of what he
was doing,
Clasped, almost with a groan, the motionless form of
Priscilla, 915
Pressing her close to his heart, as forever his own,
and exclaiming:
"Those whom the Lord hath united, let no man put
them asunder!"

Even as rivulets twain, from distant and separate
sources,
Seeing each other afar, as they leap from the rocks,
and pursuing
Each one its devious path, but drawing nearer and
nearer, 920
Rush together at last, at their trysting-place^o in the
forest;
So these lives that had run thus far in separate channels,
Coming in sight of each other, then swerving and flow-
ing asunder,
Parted by barriers strong, but drawing nearer and
nearer,
Rushed together at last, and one was lost in the other. 925

IX

THE WEDDING-DAY

FORTH from the curtain of clouds, from the tent of
purple and scarlet,
Issued the sun, the great High-Priest, in his garments
resplendent,^o
Holiness unto the Lord, in letters of light, on his fore-
head,
Round the hem of his robe the golden bells and pome-
granates.
Blessing the world he came, and the bars of vapor
beneath him
Gleamed like a grate of brass, and the sea at his feet⁹³⁰
was a laver!

This was the wedding morn of Priscilla the Puri-
tan maiden.
Friends were assembled together; the Elder and
Magistrate also
Graced the scene with their presence, and stood like
the Law and the Gospel,
One with the sanction of earth and one with the bless-
ing of heaven.⁹³⁵
Simple and brief was the wedding, as that of Ruth and
of Boaz.^o
Softly the youth and the maiden repeated the words
of betrothal,
Taking each other for husband and wife in the Magis-
trate's presence,

After the Puritan way, and the laudable custom of
Holland.

Fervently then and devoutly, the excellent Elder of
Plymouth

940

Prayed for the hearth and the home, that were founded
that day in affection,

Speaking of life and of death, and imploring Divine
benedictions.

Lo! when the service was ended, a form appeared
on the threshold,

Clad in armor of steel, a sombre and sorrowful figure!
Why does the bridegroom start and stare at the strange
apparition?

945

Why does the bride turn pale, and hide her face on his
shoulder?

Is it a phantom of air, — a bodiless, spectral illusion?
Is it a ghost from the grave, that has come to forbid
the betrothal?

Long had it stood there unseen, a guest uninvited, un-
welcomed;

Over its clouded eyes there had passed at times an
expression

950

Softening the gloom and revealing the warm heart
hidden beneath them,

As when across the sky the driving rack of the rain
cloud

Grows for a moment thin, and betrays the sun by its
brightness.

Once it had lifted its hand, and moved its lips, but
was silent,

As if an iron will had mastered the fleeting inten-
tion.

955

But when were ended the troth and the prayer and
the last benediction,
Into the room it strode, and the people beheld with
amazement
Bodily there in his armor Miles Standish, the Captain
of Plymouth!
Grasping the bridegroom's hand, he said with emotion,
"Forgive me!
I have been angry and hurt, — too long have I cherished
the feeling; 960
I have been cruel and hard, but now, thank God! it
is ended.
Mine is the same hot blood that leaped in the veins of
Hugh Standish,
Sensitive, swift to resent, but as swift in atoning for error.
Never so much as now was Miles Standish the friend of
John Alden."
Thereupon answered the bridegroom: "Let all be
forgotten between us, — 965
All save the dear old friendship, and that shall grow
older and dearer!"
Then the Captain advanced, and, bowing, saluted Priscilla,
Gravely, and after the manner of old-fashioned gentry
in England,
Something of camp and of court, of town and of country,
commingled,
Wishing her joy of her wedding, and loudly lauding
her husband. 970
Then he said with a smile: "I should have remembered the adage, —
If you will be well served, you must serve yourself;
and moreover,

No man can gather cherries in Kent at the season of Christmas°!"

Great was the people's amazement, and greater yet
their rejoicing,
Thus to behold once more the sunburnt face of their
Captain, 975
Whom they had mourned as dead; and they gathered
and crowded about him,
Eager to see him and hear him, forgetful of bride and
of bridegroom,
Questioning, answering, laughing, and each interrupt-
ing the other,
Till the good Captain declared, being quite overpow-
ered and bewildered,
He had rather by far break into an Indian encamp-
ment, 980
Than come again to a wedding to which he had not
been invited.

Meanwhile the bridegroom went forth and stood
with the bride at the doorway,
Breathing the perfumed air of that warm and beauti-
ful morning.
Touched with autumnal tints, but lonely and sad in
the sunshine,
Lay extended before them the land of toil and priva-
tion; 985
There were the graves of the dead, and the barren
waste of the sea-shore,
There the familiar fields, the groves of pine, and the
meadows;
But to their eyes transfigured, it seemed as the Garden
of Eden,

Filled with the presence of God, whose voice was the sound of the ocean.

Soon was their vision disturbed by the noise and stir of departure,
Friends coming forth from the house, and impatient of longer delaying,
Each with his plan for the day, and the work that was left uncompleted.
Then from a stall near at hand, amid exclamations of wonder,
Alden the thoughtful, the careful, so happy, so proud of Priscilla,
Brought out his snow-white bull, obeying the hand of its master,
Led by a cord that was tied to an iron ring in its nostrils,
Covered with crimson cloth, and a cushion placed for a saddle.
She should not walk, he said, through the dust and heat of the noonday;
Nay, she should ride like a queen, not plod along like a peasant.
Somewhat alarmed at first, but reassured by the others,
Placing her hand on the cushion, her foot in the hand of her husband,
Gayly, with joyous laugh, Priscilla mounted her palfrey.
"Nothing is wanting now," he said with a smile, "but the distaff;
Then you would be in truth my queen, my beautiful Bertha!"

Onward the bridal procession now moved to their
new habitation, 1005
Happy husband and wife, and friends conversing to-
gether.
Pleasantly murmured the brook, as they crossed the
ford in the forest,
Pleased with the image that passed, like a dream of
love through its bosom,
Tremulous, floating in air, o'er the depths of the azure
abysses.
Down through the golden leaves the sun was pouring
his splendors, 1010
Gleaming on purple grapes, that, from branches above
them suspended,
Mingled their odorous breath with the balm of the
pine and the fir-tree.
Wild and sweet as the clusters that grew in the valley
of Eshcol.^o
Like a picture it seemed of the primitive, pastoral
ages,
Fresh with the youth of the world, and recalling Re-
becca and Isaac,^o 1015
Old and yet ever new, and simple and beautiful always,
Love immortal and young in the endless succession of
lovers.
So through the Plymouth woods passed onward the
bridal procession.

MINOR POEMS

PRELUDE

PLEASANT it was, when woods were green,
And winds were soft and low,
To lie amid some sylvan scene,
Where, the long drooping boughs between,
Shadows dark and sunlight sheen 5
Alternate come and go;

Or where the denser grove receives
No sunlight from above,
But the dark foliage interweaves
In one unbroken roof of leaves, 10
Underneath whose sloping eaves
The shadows hardly move.

Beneath some patriarchal tree
I lay upon the ground;
His hoary arms uplifted he, 15
And all the broad leaves over me
Clapped their little hands in glee,
With one continuous sound;—

A slumberous sound, — a sound that brings
The feelings of a dream, — 20

As of innumerable wings,
As, when a bell no longer swings,
Faint the hollow murmur rings
O'er meadow, lake, and stream.

And dreams of that which cannot die, 25
Bright visions, came to me,
As lapped in thought I used to lie,
And gaze into the summer sky,
Where the sailing clouds went by,
Like ships upon the sea; 30

Dreams that the soul of youth engage
Ere Fancy has been quelled;
Old legends of the monkish page,
Traditions of the saint and sage,
Tales that have the rime of age, 35
And chronicles of Eld.

And, loving still these quaint old themes,
Even in the city's throng
I feel the freshness of the streams,
That, crossed by shades and sunny gleams, 40
Water the green land of dreams,
The holy land of song.

Therefore, at Pentecost, which brings^o
The Spring, clothed like a bride,
When nestling buds unfold their wings, 45
And bishop's-caps have golden rings,^o
Musing upon many things,
I sought the woodlands wide.

The green trees whispered low and mild;

It was a sound of joy!

50

They were my playmates when a child,

And rocked me in their arms so wild!

Still they looked at me and smiled,

As if I were a boy;

And ever whispered, mild and low,

"Come, be a child once more!"

55

And waved their long arms to and fro,

And beckoned solemnly and slow;

Oh, I could not choose but go

Into the woodlands hoar,

60

Into the blithe and breathing air,

Into the solemn wood,

Solemn and silent everywhere!

Nature with folded hands seemed there,

Kneeling at her evening prayer!

65

Like one in prayer I stood.

Before me rose an avenue

Of tall and sombrous pines;

Abroad their fan-like branches grew,

And, where the sunshine darted through,

70

Spread a vapor soft and blue,

In long and sloping lines.

And, falling on my weary brain,

Like a fast-falling shower,

The dreams of youth came back again,

75

Low lisplings of the summer rain,

Dropping on the ripened grain,

As once upon the flower.

Visions of childhood! Stay, O stay!

Ye were so sweet and wild!

80

And distant voices seemed to say,

"It cannot be! They pass away!

Other themes demand thy lay°;

Thou art no more a child!

"The land of Song within thee lies,

85

Watered by living springs;

The lids of Fancy's sleepless eyes

Are gates unto that Paradise;

Holy thoughts, like stars, arise,

Its clouds are angels' wings.

90

"Learn, that henceforth thy song shall be,

Not mountains capped with snow,

Nor forests sounding like the sea,

Nor rivers flowing ceaselessly,

Where the woodlands bend to see

95

The bending heavens below.

"There is a forest where the din

Of iron branches sounds!

A mighty river roars between,

And whosoever looks therein

100

Sees the heavens all black with sin,

Sees not its depths, nor bounds.

"Athwart the swinging branches cast,

Soft rays of sunshine pour;

Then comes the fearful wintry blast;

105

Our hopes, like withered leaves, fall fast;

Pallid lips say, 'It is past!

We can return no more!'

“Look, then, into thine heart, and write!

Yes, into Life's deep stream!

110

All forms of sorrow and delight,

All solemn Voices of the Night,

That can soothe thee, or affright, —

Be these henceforth thy theme.”

HYMN TO THE NIGHT

I HEARD the trailing garments of the Night

Sweep through her marble halls!

I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light

From the celestial walls!

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,

5

Stoop o'er me from above;

The calm, majestic presence of the Night,

As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,

The manifold, soft chimes,

10

That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,

Like some old ports' rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air

My spirit drank repose;

The fountain of perpetual peace flows there, —

15

From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear

What man has borne before!

Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more.

20

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like^o I breathe this prayer!
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice prayed for, the most fair,
The best-beloved Night!

A PSALM OF LIFE^o

WHAT THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN SAID TO THE
PSALMIST

TELL me not, in mournful numbers,
"Life is but an empty dream!" —
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
"Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"
Was not spoken of the soul.

5

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

10

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

15

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

20

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act, — act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

25

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

30

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

35

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS°

THERE is a Reaper, whose name is Death,
And, with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

"Shall I have naught that is fair?" saith he; 5
"Have naught but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
I will give them all back again."

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves; 10
It was for the Lord of Paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

"My Lord has need of these flowerets gay,"
The Reaper said, and smiled;
Dear tokens of the earth are they, 15
Where He was once a child.

"They shall all bloom in fields of light,
Transplanted by my care,
And saints, upon their garments white,
These sacred blossoms wear." 20

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,
The flowers she most did love;
She knew she should find them all again
In the fields of light above.

Oh, not in cruelty, not in wrath, 25
The Reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away.

THE LIGHT OF STARS°

THE night is come, but not too soon;
And sinking silently,
All silently, the little moon
Drops down behind the sky.

There is no light in earth or heaven
But the cold light of stars;
And the first watch of night is given
To the red planet Mars.° 5

Is it the tender star of love?
The star of love and dreams? 10
O no! from that blue tent above
A hero's armor gleams.

And earnest thoughts within me rise,
When I behold afar,
Suspended in the evening skies, 15
The shield of that red star.

O star of strength! I see thee stand
And smile upon my pain;
Thou beckonest with thy mailèd hand,
And I am strong again. 20

Within my breast there is no light,
But the cold light of stars;
I give the first watch of the night
To the red planet Mars.

The star of the unconquered will, 25
He rises in my breast,
Serene, and resolute, and still,
And calm and self-possessed.

And thou, too, whosoe'er thou art, 30
That readest this brief psalm,
As one by one thy hopes depart,
Be resolute and calm.

O, fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know ere long,
Know how sublime a thing it is 35
To suffer and be strong.

FOOTSTEPS OF ANGELS°

WHEN the hours of Day are numbered,
And the voices of the Night
Wake the better soul, that slumbered,
To a holy, calm delight;

Ere the evening lamps are lighted, 5
And, like phantoms grim and tall,
Shadows from the fitful firelight
Dance upon the parlor wall;

Then the forms of the departed
Enter at the open door; 10
The beloved, the true-hearted,
Come to visit me once more;

He, the young and strong, who cherished°
Noble longings for the strife,
By the roadside fell and perished, 15
Weary with the march of life !

They, the holy ones and weakly,
Who the cross of suffering bore,
Folded their pale hands so meekly,
Spake with us on earth no more ! 20

And with them the Being Beauteous,°
Who unto my youth was given,
More than all things else to love me,
And is now a saint in heaven.

With a slow and noiseless footstep 25
Comes that messenger divine,
Takes the vacant chair beside me,
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

And she sits and gazes at me
With those deep and tender eyes, 30
Like the stars, so still and saintlike,
Looking downward from the skies.

Uttered not, yet comprehended,
Is the spirit's voiceless prayer,
Soft rebukes, in blessings ended, 35
Breathing from her lips of air.

Oh, though oft depressed and lonely,
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only
Such as these have lived and died ! 40

FLOWERS

SPAKE full well, in language quaint and olden,
One who dwelleth by the castled Rhine,
When he called the flowers, so blue and golden,
Stars, that in earth's firmament do shine.

Stars they are, wherein we read our history, 5
As astrologers and seers of eld^o;
Yet not wrapped about with awful mystery,
Like the burning stars, which they beheld.

Wondrous truths, and manifold as wondrous,
God hath written in those stars above; 10
But not less in the bright flowerets under us
Stands the revelation of his love.

Bright and glorious is that revelation,
Written all over this great world of ours;
Making evident our own creation, 15
In these stars of earth, these golden flowers.

And the Poet, faithful and far-seeing,
Sees, alike in stars and flowers, a part
Of the self-same, universal being,
Which is throbbing in his brain and heart. 20

Gorgeous flowerets in the sunlight shining,
Blossoms flaunting in the eye of day,
Tremulous leaves, with soft and silver lining,
Buds that open only to decay;

Brilliant hopes, all woven in gorgeous tissues, 25
Flaunting gayly in the golden light;
Large desires, with most uncertain issues,
Tender wishes, blossoming at night!

These in flowers and men are more than seeming,
Workings are they of the self-same powers, 30
Which the Poet, in no idle dreaming,
Seeth in himself and in the flowers.

Everywhere about us are they glowing,
Some like stars, to tell us Spring is born;
Others, their blue eyes with tears o'erflowing, 35
Stand like Ruth amid the golden corn°;

Not alone in Spring's armorial bearing,
And in Summer's green-emblazoned field,
But in arms of brave old Autumn's wearing,
In the centre of his brazen shield; 40

Not alone in meadows and green alleys,
On the mountain-top, and by the brink
Of sequestered pools in woodland valleys,
Where the slaves of nature stoop to drink;

Not alone in her vast dome of glory, 45
Not on graves of bird and beast alone,
But in old cathedrals, high and hoary,
On the tombs of heroes, carved in stone;

In the cottage of the rudest peasant,
In ancestral homes, whose crumbling towers. 50
Speaking of the Past unto the Present,
Tell us of the ancient Games of Flowers;

In all places, then, and in all seasons,
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,
Teaching us, by most persuasive reasons, 55
How akin they are to human things.

And with childlike, credulous affection
We behold their tender buds expand;
Emblems of our own great resurrection,
Emblems of the bright and better land. 60

THE BELEAGUERED CITY

I HAVE read, in some old, marvellous tale,
Some legend strange and vague,
That a midnight host of spectres pale
Beleaguered the walls of Prague.

Beside the Moldau's rushing stream,^o 5
With the wan moon overhead,
There stood, as in an awful dream,
The army of the dead.

White as a sea-fog, landward bound,
The spectral camp was seen, 10
And, with a sorrowful, deep sound,
The river flowed between.

No other voice nor sound was there,
No drum, nor sentry's pace;
The mist-like banners clasped the air 15
As clouds with clouds embrace.

But when the old cathedral bell
Proclaimed the morning prayer,
The white pavilions rose and fell
On the alarmèd air. 20

Down the broad valley fast and far
The troubled army fled;
Up rose the glorious morning star,
The ghastly host was dead.

I have read, in the marvellous heart of man, 25
That strange and mystic scroll,
That an army of phantoms vast and wan
Beleaguer the human soul.

Encamped beside Life's rushing stream,
In Fancy's misty light, 30
Gigantic shapes and shadows gleam
Portentous through the night.

Upon its midnight battle-ground
The spectral camp is seen,
And, with a sorrowful, deep sound, 35
Flows the River of Life between.

No other voice nor sound is there,
In the army of the grave;
No other challenge breaks the air,
But the rushing of Life's wave. 40

And when the solemn and deep church-bell
Entreats the soul to pray,
The midnight phantoms feel the spell,
The shadows sweep away.

Down the broad Vale of Tears afar
The spectral camp is fled;
Faith shineth as a morning star,
Our ghastly fears are dead.

45

MIDNIGHT MASS FOR THE DYING YEAR°

YES, the Year is growing old,
And his eye is pale and bleared!
Death, with frosty hand and cold,
Plucks the old man by the beard,
Sorely, sorely!

5

The leaves are falling, falling,
Solemnly and slow;
Caw! caw! the rooks are calling,
It is a sound of woe,
A sound of woe!

10

Through woods and mountain passes
The winds, like anthems, roll;
They are chanting solemn masses,
Singing, "Pray for this poor soul,
Pray, pray!"

15

And the hooded clouds, like friars,
Tell their beads in drops of rain,
And patter their doleful prayers;
But their prayers are all in vain,
All in vain!

20

There he stands in the foul weather,
 The foolish, fond Old Year,
 Crowned with wild flowers and with heather,
 Like weak, despised Lear,^o
 A king, a king ! 25

Then comes the summer-like day,
 Bids the old man rejoice !
 His joy ! his last ! Oh, the old man gray
 Loveth that ever-soft voice,
 Gentle and low. 30

To the crimson woods he saith,
 To the voice gentle and low
 Of the soft air, like a daughter's breath,
 "Pray do not mock me so !
 Do not laugh at me !" 35

And now the sweet day is dead ;
 Cold in his arms it lies ;
 No stain from its breath is spread
 Over the glassy skies,
 No mist or stain ! 40

Then, too, the Old Year dieth,
 And the forests utter a moan,
 Like the voice of one who crieth
 In the wilderness alone,
 "Vex not his ghost !" 45

Then comes, with an awful roar,
 Gathering and sounding on,
 The storm-wind from Labrador,^o

The wind Euroclydon,^o
The storm-wind !

50

Howl ! howl ! and from the forest
Sweep the red leaves away !
Would the sins that thou abhorrest,
O soul ! could thus decay,
And be swept away !

55

For there shall come a mightier blast,
There shall be a darker day ;
And the stars, from heaven downcast,
Like red leaves be swept away !
Kyrie, eleyson^o !
Christie, eleyson !

60

WOODS IN WINTER

WHEN winter winds are piercing chill,
And through the hawthorn blows the gale,
With solemn feet I tread the hill,
That overbrows the lonely vale.

O'er the bare upland, and away
Through the long reach of desert woods,
The embracing sunbeams chastely play,
And gladden these deep solitudes.

5

Where, twisted round the barren oak,
The summer vine in beauty clung,
And summer winds the stillness broke,
The crystal icicle is hung.

10

Where, from their frozen urns, mute springs
Pour out the river's gradual tide,
Shrilly the skater's iron rings, 15
And voices fill the woodland side.

Alas ! how changed from the fair scene,
When birds sang out their mellow lay,
And winds were soft, and woods were green,
And the song ceased not with the day. 20

But still wild music is abroad,
Pale, desert woods ! within your crowd ;
And gathering winds, in hoarse accord,
Amid the vocal reeds pipe loud.

Chill airs and wintry winds ! my ear 25
Has grown familiar with your song ;
I hear it in the opening year,
I listen, and it cheers me long.

HYMN OF THE MORAVIAN NUNS OF BETHLEHEM°

AT THE CONSECRATION OF PULASKI'S BANNER

WHEN the dying flame of day
Through the chancel shot its ray,
Far the glimmering tapers shed
Faint light on the cowlèd head ;
And the censer burning swung, 5
Where, before the altar, hung

The blood-red banner, that with prayer^o
Had been consecrated there.
And the nuns' sweet hymn was heard the while,
Sung low, in the dim, mysterious aisle.

10

"Take thy banner! May it wave
Proudly o'er the good and brave;
When the battle's distant wail
Breaks the sabbath of our vale,
When the clarion's music thrills
To the hearts of these lone hills,
When the spear in conflict shakes,
And the strong lance shivering breaks.

15

"Take thy banner! and, beneath
The battle-cloud's encircling wreath,
Guard it, till our homes are free!
Guard it! God will prosper thee!
In the dark and trying hour,
In the breaking forth of power,
In the rush of steeds and men,
His right hand will shield thee then.

20

25

"Take thy banner! But when night
Closes round the ghastly fight,
If the vanquished warrior bow,
Spare him! By our holy vow,
By our prayers and many tears,
By the mercy that endears,
Spare him! he our love hath shared!
Spare him! as thou wouldst be spared!

30

"Take thy banner! and if e'er
Thou shouldst press the soldier's bier,

35

And the muffled drum should beat
To the tread of mournful feet,
Then this crimson flag shall be
Martial cloak and shroud for thee."

40

SUNRISE ON THE HILLS

I stood upon the hills, when heaven's wide arch
Was glorious with the sun's returning march,
And woods were brightened, and soft gales
Went forth to kiss the sun-clad vales.
The clouds were far beneath me; bathed in light, 5
They gathered midway round the wooded height,
And, in their fading glory, shone
Like hosts in battle overthrown,
As many a pinnacle, with shifting glance,
Through the gray mist thrust up its shattered lance, 10
And rocking on the cliff was left
The dark pine blasted, bare, and cleft.
The veil of cloud was lifted, and below
Glowed the rich valley, and the river's flow
Was darkened by the forest's shade, 15
Or glistened in the white cascade;
Where upward, in the mellow blush of day,
The noisy bittern wheeled his spiral way.^o

I heard the distant waters dash,
I saw the current whirl and flash, 20
And richly, by the blue lake's silver beach,
The woods were bending with a silent reach.
Then o'er the vale, with gentle swell,

The music of the village bell
Came sweetly to the echo-giving hills; 25
And the wild horn, whose voice the woodland fills,
Was ringing to the merry shout
That faint and far the glen sent out,
Where, answering to the sudden shot, thin smoke,
Through thick-leaved branches, from the dingle
broke.° 30

If thou art worn and hard beset° -
With sorrows, that thou wouldst forget,
If thou wouldst read a lesson, that will keep
Thy heart from fainting and thy soul from sleep,
Go to the woods and hills! No tears 35
Dim the sweet look that Nature wears.

THE SPIRIT OF POETRY

THERE is a quiet spirit in these woods,
That dwells where'er the gentle south-wind blows;
Where, underneath the white-thorn in the glade,
The wild flowers bloom, or, kissing the soft air,
The leaves above their sunny palms outspread. 5
With what a tender and impassioned voice
It fills the nice and delicate ear of thought,
When the fast ushering star of morning comes
O'er-riding the gray hills with golden scarf;
Or when the cowed and dusky-sandaled Eve,° 10
In mourning weeds, from out the western gate,°
Departs with silent pace! That spirit moves
In the green valley, where the silver brook,

From its full laver, pours the white cascade;
And, babbling low amid the tangled woods, 15
Slips down through moss-grown stones with endless
laughter.

And frequent, on the everlasting hills,
Its feet go forth, when it doth wrap itself
In all the dark embroidery of the storm,
And shouts the stern, strong wind. And here,
amid 20

The silent majesty of these deep woods,
Its presence shall uplift thy thoughts from earth,
As to the sunshine and the pure, bright air
Their tops the green trees lift. Hence gifted bards
Have ever loved the calm and quiet shades. 25
For them there was an eloquent voice in all
The sylvan pomp of woods, the golden sun,
The flowers, the leaves, the river on its way,
Blue skies, and silver clouds, and gentle winds,
The swelling upland, where the sidelong sun 30
Aslant the wooded slope, at evening, goes,
Groves, through whose broken roof the sky looks in,
Mountain, and shattered cliff, and sunny vale,
The distant lake, fountains, and mighty trees,
In many a lazy syllable, repeating 35
Their old poetic legends to the wind.

And this is the sweet spirit, that doth fill
The world; and, in these wayward days of youth,
My busy fancy oft embodies it,
As a bright image of the light and beauty 40
That dwell in nature, — of the heavenly forms
We worship in our dreams, and the soft hues
That stain the wild bird's wing, and flush the clouds

When the sun sets. Within her eye°
The heaven of April, with its changing light, 45
And when it wears the blue of May, is hung,
And on her lip the rich, red rose. Her hair
Is like the summer tresses of the trees,
When twilight makes them brown, and on her cheek
Blushes the richness of an autumn sky, 50
With ever-shifting beauty. Then her breath,
It is so like the gentle air of Spring,
As, from the morning's dewy flowers, it comes
Full of their fragrance, that it is a joy
To have it round us, — and her silver voice 55
Is the rich music of a summer bird,
Heard in the still night, with its passionate cadence.

BURIAL OF THE MINNISINK

ON sunny slope and beechen swell,
The shadowed light of evening fell;
And, where the maple's leaf was brown,
With soft and silent lapse came down,
The glory, that the wood receives, 5
At sunset, in its golden leaves.

Far upward in the mellow light
Rose the blue hills. One cloud of white,
Around a far uplifted cone,
In the warm blush of evening shone; 10
An image of the silver lakes,
By which the Indian's soul awakes.

But soon a funeral hymn was heard
Where the soft breath of evening stirred
The tall, gray forest ; and a band 15
Of stern in heart, and strong in hand,
Came winding down beside the wave,
To lay the red chief in his grave.°

They sang, that by his native bowers
He stood, in the last moon of flowers, 20
And thirty snows had not yet shed
Their glory on the warrior's head ;
But, as the summer fruit decays,
So died he in those naked days.

A dark cloak of the roebuck's skin° 25
Covered the warrior, and within
Its heavy folds the weapons, made
For the hard toils of war, were laid ;
The cuirass,° woven of plaited reeds,
And the broad belt of shells and beads. 30

Before, a dark-haired virgin train
Chanted the death dirge of the slain ;
Behind, the long procession came
Of hoary men and chiefs of fame,
With heavy hearts, and eyes of grief, 35
Leading the war-horse of their chief.

Stripped of his proud and martial dress,
Uncurbed, unreined, and riderless,
With darting eye, and nostril spread,
And heavy and impatient tread, 40

He came; and oft that eye so proud
 Asked for his rider in the crowd.
 They buried the dark chief; they freed
 Beside the grave his battle steed;
 And swift an arrow cleaved its way
 To his stern heart! One piercing neigh
 Arose, and, on the dead man's plain,
 The rider grasps his steed again.

45

THE SKELETON IN ARMOR°

"SPEAK! speak! thou fearful guest!
 Who, with thy hollow breast
 Still in rude armor drest,
 Comest to daunt me!
 Wrapt not in Eastern balms,°
 But with thy fleshless palms
 Stretched, as if asking alms,
 Why dost thou haunt me?"

5

Then, from those cavernous eyes
 Pale flashes seemed to rise,
 As when the Northern skies
 Gleam in December;
 And, like the water's flow
 Under December's snow,
 Came a dull voice of woe
 From the heart's chamber.

10

15

"I was a Viking old°!
 My deeds, though manifold,
 No Skald in song has told,°
 No Saga taught thee°!

20

Take heed, that in thy verse
Thou dost the tale rehearse,
Else dread a dead man's curse;
For this I sought thee.

“Far in the Northern Land, 25
By the wild Baltic's strand,
I, with my childish hand,
Tamed the gerfalcon°;
And, with my skates fast-bound,
Skimmed the half-frozen Sound, 30
That the poor whimpering hound
Trembled to walk on.

“Oft to his frozen lair
Tracked I the grisly bear;
While from my path the hare 35
Fled like a shadow;
Oft through the forest dark
Followed the were-wolf's bark,°
Until the soaring lark
Sang from the meadow. 40

“But when I older grew,
Joining a corsair's crew,
O'er the dark sea I flew
With the marauders.
Wild was the life we led; 45
Many the souls that sped,
Many the hearts that bled,
By our stern orders.

“Many a wassail-bout°
Wore the long Winter out; 50

Often our midnight shout
Set the cocks crowing,
As we the Berserk's tale^o
Measured in cups of ale,
Draining the oaken pail,
Filled to o'erflowing. 55

"Once as I told in glee
Tales of the stormy sea,
Soft eyes did gaze on me,
Burning yet tender; 60
And as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
Fell their soft splendor.

"I wooed the blue-eyed maid, 65
Yielding, yet half afraid,
And in the forest's shade
Our vows were plighted.
Under its loosened vest
Fluttered her little breast, 70
Like birds within their nest
By the hawk frightened.

"Bright in her father's hall
Shields gleamed upon the wall,
Loud sang the minstrels all, 75
Chaunting his glory;
When of old Hildebrand^o
I asked his daughter's hand,
Mute did the minstrels stand
To hear my story. 80

“While the brown ale he quaffed,
Loud then the champion laughed,
And as the wind-gusts waft
 The sea-foam brightly,
So the loud laugh of scorn, 85
Out of those lips unshorn,
From the deep drinking-horn
 Blew the foam lightly.

“She was a Prince’s child,
I but a Viking wild, 90
And though she blushed and smiled,
 I was discarded !
Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew’s flight,
Why did they leave that night 95
 Her nest unguarded ?

“Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me,
Fairest of all was she
 Among the Norsemen ! 100
When on the white sea-strand,
Waving his armed hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand,
 With twenty horsemen.

“Then launched they to the blast, 105
Bent like a reed each mast,
Yet we were gaining fast,
 When the wind failed us ;
And with a sudden flaw
Came round the gusty Skaw,° 110

So that our foe we saw
Laugh as he hailed us.

“And as to catch the gale
Round veered the flapping sail,
‘Death!’ was the helmsman’s hail 115
‘Death without quarter!’

Mid-ships with iron keel
Struck we her ribs of steel;
Down her black hulk did reel
Through the black water! 120

“As with his wings aslant,
Sails the fierce cormorant,^o
Seeking some rocky haunt,
With his prey laden, —
So toward the open main, 125
Beating to sea again,
Through the wild hurricane,
Bore I the maiden.

“Three weeks we westward bore,
And when the storm was o’er, 130
Cloud-like we saw the shore
Stretching to lee-ward;
There for my lady’s bower
Built I the lofty tower,
Which, to this very hour, 135
Stands looking seaward.

“There lived we many years;
Time dried the maiden’s tears;
She had forgot her fears,
She was a mother; 140

Death closed her mild blue eyes,
Under that tower she lies;
Ne'er shall the sun arise
On such another !

“ Still grew my bosom then, . 145
Still as a stagnant fen !
Hateful to me were men,
The sunlight hateful !
In the vast forest here,
Clad in my warlike gear, 150
Fell I upon my spear,
Oh, death was grateful !

“ Thus, seamed with many scars,
Bursting these prison bars,
Up to its native stars 155
My soul ascended !
There from the flowing bowl
Deep drinks the warrior's soul,
Skoal ! to the Northland ! skoal ° !”
— Thus the tale ended. 160

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS°

It was the schooner Hesperus,
That sailed the wintry sea;
And the skipper had taken his little daughter,
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax, 5
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,

And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
His pipe was in his mouth, 10
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old Sailor,
Had sailed the Spanish Main,^o
“I pray thee, put into yonder port, 15
For I fear a hurricane.

“Last night, the moon had a golden ring,
And to-night no moon we see!”
The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe,
And a scornful laugh laughed he 20

Colder and louder blew the wind,
A gale from the Northeast;
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain 25
The vessel in its strength;
She shuddered and paused, like a frightened steed,
Then leaped her cable's length.

“Come hither! come hither! my little daughter,
And do not tremble so; 30
For I can weather the roughest gale
That ever wind did blow.”

He wrapped her warm in his sea-man's coat
Against the stinging blast;

He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast. 35

“O father ! I hear the church-bells ring,
Oh say, what may it be ?”
“ ’Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast !” —
And he steered for the open sea. 40

“ O father ! I hear the sound of guns,
Oh say, what may it be ?”
“ Some ship in distress, that cannot live
In such an angry sea !”

“ O father ! I see a gleaming light,
Oh say, what may it be ?” 45
But the father answered never a word,
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face turned to the skies, 50
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That savèd she might be ;
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave, 55
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
Towards the reef of Norman’s Woe.° 60

And ever the fitful gusts between
A sound came from the land ;

It was the sound of the trampling surf,
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck. 65

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
Looked soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side
Like the horns of an angry bull. 70

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board;
Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,
Ho! ho! the breakers roared! 75

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair,
Lashed close to a drifting mast. 80

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes;
And he saw her hair, like the brown seaweed,
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,
In the midnight and the snow!
Christ save us all from a death like this,
On the reef of Norman's Woe! 85

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH^o

UNDER a spreading chestnut-tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms 5
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can, 10
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge, 15
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar, 20
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys; 25

He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice. 30

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise !
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes 35
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling, — rejoicing, — sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close; 40
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught !
Thus at the flaming forge of life 45
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

THE RAINY DAY

THE day is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,
And the day is dark and dreary. 5

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary ;
It rains, and the wind is never weary ;
My thoughts still cling to the mouldering Past,
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,
And the days are dark and dreary.

10

Be still, sad heart ! and cease repining ;
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining ;
Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.

15

GOD'S-ACRE

I LIKE that ancient Saxon phrase, which calls
The burial-ground God's-Acre ! It is just ;
It consecrates each grave within its walls,
And breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust.

God's-Acre ! Yes, that blessed name imparts
Comfort to those who in the grave have sown
The seed that they had garnered in their hearts,
Their bread of life, alas ! no more their own.

5

Into its furrows shall we all be cast,
In the sure faith, that we shall rise again
At the great harvest, when the arch-angel's blast
Shall winnow, like a fan, the chaff and grain.

10

Then shall the good stand in immortal bloom,
In the fair gardens of that second birth ;

And each bright blossom mingle its perfume 15
With that of flowers, which never bloomed on earth.

With thy rude ploughshare, Death, turn up the sod,
And spread the furrow for the seed we sow;
This is the field and Acre of our God,
This is the place where human harvests grow.° 20

TO THE RIVER CHARLES°

RIVER! that in silence windest
Through the meadows, bright and free,
Till at length thy rest thou findest
In the bosom of the sea!

Four long years of mingled feeling, 5
Half in rest, and half in strife,
I have seen thy waters stealing
Onward, like the stream of life.

Thou hast taught me, Silent River!
Many a lesson, deep and long; 10
Thou hast been a generous giver;
I can give thee but a song.

Oft in sadness and in illness,
I have watched thy current glide,
Till the beauty of its stillness 15
Overflowed me, like a tide.

And in better hours and brighter,
When I saw thy waters gleam,
I have felt my heart beat lighter,
And leap onward with thy stream. 20

Not for this alone I love thee,
Nor because thy waves of blue
From celestial seas above thee
Take their own celestial hue.

Where yon shadowy woodlands hide thee, 25
And thy waters disappear,
Friends I love have dwelt beside thee,
And have made thy margin dear.

More than this; — thy name reminds me
Of three friends, all true and tried°; 30
And that name, like magic, binds me
Closer, closer to thy side.

Friends my soul with joy remembers!
How like quivering flames they start,
When I fan the living embers 35
On the hearthstone of my heart!

'Tis for this, thou Silent River!
That my spirit leans to thee;
Thou hast been a generous giver,
Take this idle song from me. 40

THE GOBLET OF LIFE

FILLED is Life's goblet to the brim;
And though my eyes with tears are dim,
I see its sparkling bubbles swim,
And chant a melancholy hymn
With solemn voice and slow. 5

No purple flowers, — no garlands green,
Conceal the goblet's shade or sheen,
Nor maddening draughts of Hippocrene,^o
Like gleams of sunshine, flash between
Thick leaves of mistletoe.^o

10

This goblet, wrought with curious art,
Is filled with waters, that upstart,
When the deep fountains of the heart,
By strong convulsions rent apart,
Are running all to waste.

15

And as it mantling passes round,
With fennel is it wreathed and crowned,
Whose seed and foliage sun-imbrowned
Are in its waters steeped and drowned,
And give a bitter taste.

20

Above the lowly plants it towers,
The fennel, with its yellow flowers,
And in an earlier age than ours
Was gifted with the wondrous powers,
Lost vision to restore.

25

It gave new strength, and fearless mood;
And gladiators, fierce and rude,
Mingled it in their daily food;
And he who battled and subdued,
A wreath of fennel wore.

30

Then in Life's goblet freely press
The leaves that give it bitterness,
Nor prize the colored waters less,
For in thy darkness and distress
New light and strength they give!

35

And he who has not learned to know
How false its sparkling bubbles show,
How bitter are the drops of woe,
With which its brim may overflow,
He has not learned to live.

40

The prayer of Ajax was for light°;
Through all that dark and desperate fight,
The blackness of that noonday night,
He asked but the return of sight,
To see his foeman's face.

45

Let our unceasing, earnest prayer
Be, too, for light, — for strength to bear
Our portion of the weight of care,
That crushes into dumb despair
One half the human race.

50

O suffering, sad humanity !
O ye afflicted ones, who lie
Steeped to the lips in misery,
Longing, and yet afraid to die,
Patient, though sorely tried !

55

I pledge you in this cup of grief,
Where floats the fennel's bitter leaf
The Battle of our Life is brief,
The alarm, — the struggle, — the relief;
Then sleep we side by side.

60

MAIDENHOOD°

MAIDEN ! with the meek, brown eyes,
In whose orbs a shadow lies
Like the dusk in evening skies !

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one, 5
As the braided streamlets run !

Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet !

Gazing, with a timid glance, 10
On the brooklet's swift advance,
On the river's broad expanse !

Deep and still, that gliding stream
Beautiful to thee must seem,
As the river of a dream. 15

Then why pause with indecision,
When bright angels in thy vision
Beckon thee to fields Elysian° ?

Seest thou shadows sailing by,
As the dove, with startled eye, 20
Sees the falcon's shadow fly° ?

Hearest thou voices on the shore,
That our ears perceive no more,
Deafened by the cataract's roar ?

O, thou child of many prayers ! 25
Life hath quicksands, — Life hath snares !
Care and age come unawares !

Like the swell of some sweet tune,
Morning rises into noon,
May glides onward into June. 30

Childhood is the bough, where slumbered
Birds and blossoms many-numbered ; —
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

Gather, then, each flower that grows,
When the young heart overflows, 35
To embalm that tent of snows.

Bear a lily in thy hand ;
Gates of brass cannot withstand
One touch of that magic wand.

Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth, 40
In thy heart the dew of youth,
On thy lips the smile of truth.

O, that dew, like balm, shall steal
Into wounds that cannot heal,
Even as sleep our eyes doth seal ; 45

And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Into many a sunless heart,
For a smile of God thou art.

“ Beware the pine-tree’s withered branch !
Beware the awful avalanche ! ”
This was the peasant’s last Good-night,
A voice replied, far up the height,
Excelsior !

30

At break of day, as heavenward
The pious monks of Saint Bernard°
Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,
A voice cried through the startled air,
Excelsior !

35

A traveller, by the faithful hound,
Half-buried in the snow was found,
Still grasping in his hand of ice
That banner with the strange device,
Excelsior !

40

There in the twilight cold and gray,
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,
And from the sky, serene and far,
A voice fell, like a falling star,
Excelsior !

45

SERENADE°

STARS of the summer night !
Far in yon azure deeps,
Hide, hide your golden light !
She sleeps !
My lady sleeps !
Sleeps !

5

Moon of the summer night !
Far down yon western steeps,
Sink, sink in silver light !
She sleeps !
My lady sleeps !
Sleeps !

10

Wind of the summer night !
Where yonder woodbine creeps,
Fold, fold thy pinions light !
She sleeps !
My lady sleeps !
Sleeps !

15

Dreams of the summer night !
Tell her, her lover keeps
Watch ! while in slumbers light
She sleeps !
My lady sleeps !
Sleeps !

20

CARILLON°

In the ancient town of Bruges,°
In the quaint old Flemish city,
As the evening shades descended,
Low and loud and sweetly blended,
Low at times and loud at times,
And changing like a poet's rhymes,
Rang the beautiful wild chimes
From the Belfry in the market
Of the ancient town of Bruges.

5

Then, with deep sonorous clangor 10
Calmly answering their sweet anger,
When the wrangling bells had ended,
Slowly struck the clock eleven,
And, from out the silent heaven,
Silence on the town descended. 15
Silence, silence everywhere,
On the earth and in the air,
Save that footsteps here and there
Of some burgher home returning,
By the street lamps faintly burning, 20
For a moment woke the echoes
Of the ancient town of Bruges.

But amid my broken slumbers
Still I heard those magic numbers,
As they loud proclaimed the flight 25
And stolen marches of the night;
Till their chimes in sweet collision
Mingled with each wandering vision,
Mingled with the fortune-telling
Gypsy-bands of dreams and fancies, 30
Which amid the waste expanses
Of the silent land of trances
Have their solitary dwelling;
All else seemed asleep in Bruges,
In the quaint old Flemish city. 35

And I thought how like these chimes
Are the poet's airy rhymes,
All his rhymes and roundelays,^o
His conceits, and songs, and ditties,
From the belfry of his brain, 40

Scattered downward, though in vain,
On the roofs and stones of cities !
For by night the drowsy ear
Under its curtains cannot hear,
And by day men go their ways, 45
Hearing the music as they pass,
But deeming it no more, alas !
Than the hollow sound of brass.
Yet perchance a sleepless wight,
Lodging at some humble inn 50
In the narrow lanes of life,
When the dusk and hush of night
Shut out the incessant din
Of daylight and its toil and strife,
May listen with a calm delight 55
To the poet's melodies,
Till he hears, or dreams he hears,
Intermingled with the song,
Thoughts that he has cherished long ;
Hears amid the chime and singing 60
The bells of his own village ringing,
And wakes, and finds his slumberous eyes
Wet with most delicious tears.

Thus dreamed I, as by night I lay
In Bruges, at the Fleur-de-Blé, 65
Listening with a wild delight
To the chimes that, through the night,
Rang their changes from the Belfry
Of that quaint old Flemish city.

THE BELFRY OF BRUGES°

IN the market-place of Bruges stands the belfry old and brown;
Thrice consumed and thrice rebuilt, still it watches
o'er the town.

As the summer morn was breaking, on that lofty tower
I stood,
And the world threw off the darkness, like the weeds of
widowhood.

Thick with towns and hamlets studded, and with streams
and vapors gray,
Like a shield embossed with silver, round and vast the⁵
landscape lay.

At my feet the city slumbered. From its chimneys,
here and there,
Wreaths of snow-white smoke, ascending, vanished,
ghost-like, into air.

Not a sound rose from the city at that early morning
hour,
But I heard a heart of iron beating in the ancient
tower.

10

From their nests beneath the rafters sang the swallows
wild and high;
And the world, beneath me sleeping, seemed more
distant than the sky.

Then most musical and solemn, bringing back the olden
times,
With their strange, unearthly changes rang the melan-
choly chimes,

Like the psalms from some old cloister, when the nuns
sing in the choir;
And the great bell tolled among them, like the chant-
ing of a friar. 15

Visions of the days departed, shadowy phantoms filled
my brain;
They who live in history only seemed to walk the earth
again;

All the Foresters of Flanders, — mighty Baldwin Bras
de Fer,^o
Lyderick du Bucq and Cressy, Philip, Guy de Dam-
pierre. 20

I beheld the pageants splendid that adorned those days
of old;
Stately dames, like queens attended, knights who bore
the Fleece of Gold^o;

Lombard and Venetian merchants with deep-laden
argosies;
Ministers from twenty nations; more than royal pomp
and ease.

I beheld proud Maximilian,^o kneeling humbly on the
ground;
I beheld the gentle Mary,^o hunting with her hawk and
hound; 25

And her lighted bridal-chamber, where a duke slept
with the queen,
And the armed guard around them, and the sword
unsheathed between.

I beheld the Flemish weavers, with Namur and Juliers
bold,^o
Marching homeward from the bloody battle of the Spurs
of Gold; 30

Saw the fight at Minnewater, saw the White Hoods
moving west,
Saw great Artevelde victorious scale the Golden Dragon's
nest.^o

And again the whiskered Spaniard all the land with
terror smote;
And again the wild alarum sounded from the tocsin's
throat;

Till the bell of Ghent responded o'er lagoon and dike of
sand, 35
"I am Roland! I am Roland! there is victory in the
land^o!"

Then the sound of drums aroused me. The awakened
city's roar
Chased the phantoms I had summoned back into their
graves once more.

Hours had passed away like minutes; and, before I
was aware,
Lo! the shadow of the belfry crossed the sun-illuminated
square. 40

A GLEAM OF SUNSHINE°

THIS is the place. Stand still, my steed,
Let me review the scene,
And summon from the shadowy Past
The forms that once have been.

The Past and Present here unite 5
Beneath Time's flowing tide,
Like footprints hidden by a brook,
But seen on either side.

Here runs the highway to the town;
There the green lane descends, 10
Through which I walked to church with thee,
O gentlest of my friends!

The shadow of the linden-trees
Lay moving on the grass;
Between them and the moving boughs, 15
A shadow, thou didst pass.

Thy dress was like the lilies,
And thy heart as pure as they
One of God's holy messengers
Did walk with me that day. 20

I saw the branches of the trees
Bend down thy touch to meet,
The clover-blossoms in the grass
Rise up to kiss thy feet.

“Sleep, sleep to-day, tormenting cares,
Of earth and folly born !”
Solemnly sang the village choir
On that sweet Sabbath morn. 25

Through the closed blinds the golden sun
Poured in a dusty beam,
Like the celestial ladder seen
By Jacob in his dream. 30

And ever and anon, the wind
Sweet-scented with the hay,
Turned o’er the hymn-book’s fluttering leaves
That on the window lay. 35

Long was the good man’s sermon,
Yet it seemed not so to me;
For he spake of Ruth the beautiful,
And still I thought of thee. 40

Long was the prayer he uttered,
Yet it seemed not so to me;
For in my heart I prayed with him,
And still I thought of thee.

But now, alas ! the place seems changed;
Thou art no longer here :
Part of the sunshine of the scene
With thee did disappear. 45

Though thoughts, deep-rooted in my heart,
Like pine-trees dark and high,
Subdue the light of noon, and breathe
A low and ceaseless sigh ; 50

This memory brightens o'er the past,
As when the sun, concealed
Behind some cloud that near us hangs,
Shines on a distant field. 55

THE ARSENAL AT SPRINGFIELD°

THIS is the Arsenal. From floor to ceiling,
Like a huge organ, rise the burnished arms;
But from their silent pipes no anthem pealing
Startles the villages with strange alarms.

Ah ! what a sound will rise, how wild and dreary, 5
When the death-angel touches those swift keys !
What loud lament and dismal Miserere°
Will mingle with their awful symphonies !

I hear even now the infinite fierce chorus,
The cries of agony, the endless groan, 10
Which, through the ages that have gone before us,
In long reverberations reach our own.

On helm and harness rings the Saxon hammer,
Through Cimbric forest roars the Norseman's song,°
And loud, amid the universal clamor, 15
O'er distant deserts sounds the Tartar gong.°

I hear the Florentine, who from his palace
Wheels out his battle-bell with dréadful din,
And Aztec priests upon their teocallis°
Beat the wild war-drums made of serpent's skin ; 20

The tumult of each sacked and burning village;
The shout that every prayer for mercy drowns;
The soldiers' revels in the midst of pillage;
The wail of famine in beleaguered towns;

The bursting shell, the gateway wrenched asunder, 25
The rattling musketry, the clashing blade;
And ever and anon, in tones of thunder
The diapason of the cannonade.°

Is it, O man, with such discordant noises,
With such accursed instruments as these, 30
Thou drownest Nature's sweet and kindly voices,
And jarrest the celestial harmonies?

Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and
courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error, 35
There were no need of arsenals or forts:

The warrior's name would be a name abhorrèd!
And every nation, that should lift again
Its hand against a brother, on its forehead
Would wear forevermore the curse of Cain°! 40

Down the dark future, through long generations,
The echoing sounds grow fainter and then cease;
And like a bell, with solemn, sweet vibrations,
I hear once more the voice of Christ say, "Peace!"

Peace! and no longer from its brazen portals 45
The blast of War's great organ shakes the skies!
But beautiful as songs of the immortals,
The holy melodies of love arise.

RAIN IN SUMMER

How beautiful is the rain !
After the dust and heat,
In the broad and fiery street,
In the narrow lane,
How beautiful is the rain ! 5

How it clatters along the roofs,
Like the tramp of hoofs !
How it gushes and struggles out
From the throat of the overflowing spout !

Across the window-pane 10
It pours and pours ;
And swift and wide,
With a muddy tide,
Like a river down the gutter roars
The rain, the welcome rain ! 15

The sick man from his chamber looks
At the twisted brooks ;
He can feel the cool
Breath of each little pool ;
His fevered brain 20
Grows calm again,
And he breathes a blessing on the rain.

From the neighboring school
Come the boys,
With more than their wonted noise 25
And commotion ;

And down the wet streets
Sail their mimic fleets,
Till the treacherous pool
Ingulfs them in its whirling
And turbulent ocean. 30

In the country, on every side,
Where far and wide,
Like a leopard's tawny and spotted hide,
Stretches the plain, 35
To the dry grass and the drier grain
How welcome is the rain !

In the furrowed land
The toilsome and patient oxen stand ;
Lifting the yoke-encumbered head, 40
With their dilated nostrils spread,
They silently inhale
The clover-scented gale,
And the vapors that arise
From the well-watered and smoking soil. 45
For this rest in the furrow after toil
Their large and lustrous eyes
Seem to thank the Lord,
More than man's spoken word.

Near at hand, 50
From under the sheltering trees,
The farmer sees
His pastures, and his fields of grain,
As they bend their tops
To the numberless beating drops
Of the incessant rain. 55

He counts it as no sin
That he sees therein
Only his own thrift and gain.

These, and far more than these, 60
The Poet sees !
He can behold
Aquarius old°
Walking the fenceless fields of air :
And from each ample fold 65
Of the clouds about him rolled
Scattering everywhere
The showery rain,
As the farmer scatters his grain.

He can behold 70
Things manifold
That have not yet been wholly told ; —
Have not been wholly sung nor said.
For his thought, that never stops,
Follows the water-drops 75
Down to the graves of the dead,
Down through chasms and gulfs profound,
To the dreary fountain-head
Of lakes and rivers under ground ;
And sees them, when the rain is done, 80
On the bridge of colors seven°
Climbing up once more to heaven,
Opposite the setting sun.

Thus the Seer, 85
With vision clear,
Sees forms appear and disappear,

In the perpetual round of strange,
Mysterious change
From birth to death, from death to birth,
From earth to heaven, from heaven to earth; 90
Till glimpses more sublime
Of things unseen before,
Unto his wondering eyes reveal
The Universe, as an immeasurable wheel
Turning forevermore 95
In the rapid and rushing river of Time.

THE BRIDGE°

I stood on the bridge at midnight,
As the clocks were striking the hour,
And the moon rose o'er the city,
Behind the dark church-tower.

I saw her bright reflection 5
In the waters under me,
Like a golden goblet falling
And sinking into the sea.

And far in the hazy distance
Of that lovely night in June, 10
The blaze of the flaming furnace
Gleamed redder than the moon.

Among the long, black rafters
The wavering shadows lay,
And the current that came from the ocean 15
Seemed to lift and bear them away;

As, sweeping and eddying through them,
Rose the belated tide,
And, streaming into the moonlight,
The seaweed floated wide.

20

And like those waters rushing
Among the wooden piers,
A flood of thoughts came o'er me
That filled my eyes with tears.

How often, oh how often,
In the days that had gone by,
I had stood on that bridge at midnight
And gazed on that wave and sky !

25

How often, oh how often,
I had wished that the ebbing tide
Would bear me away on its bosom
O'er the ocean wild and wide !

30

For my heart was hot and restless,
And my life was full of care,
And the burden laid upon me
Seemed greater than I could bear.

35

But now it has fallen from me,
It is buried in the sea;
And only the sorrow of others
Throws its shadow over me.

40

Yet whenever I cross the river
On its bridge with wooden piers,
Like the odor of brine from the ocean
Comes the thought of other years.

And I think how many thousands
Of care-encumbered men,
Each bearing his burden of sorrow,
Have crossed the bridge since then.

I see the long procession
Still passing to and fro,
The young heart hot and restless,
And the old subdued and slow !

And forever and forever,
As long as the river flows,
As long as the heart has passions, 55
As long as life has woes;

The moon and its broken reflection
And its shadows shall appear,
As the symbol of love in heaven,
And its wavering image here.

THE DAY IS DONE

THE day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me
That my soul cannot resist:

A feeling of sadness and longing,
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain. 10

Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day. 15

Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of Time. 20

For, like strains of martial music,
Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavor;
And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet, 25
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who, through long days of labor,
And nights devoid of ease, 30
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction 35
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

40

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares, that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS

SOMEWHAT back from the village street
Stands the old-fashioned country-seat.^o
Across its antique portico
Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw;
And from its station in the hall
An ancient timepiece says to all, —
“Forever — never!
Never — forever!”

5

Half-way up the stairs it stands,
And points and beckons with its hands
From its case of massive oak,
Like a monk, who, under his cloak,
Crosses himself, and sighs, alas!
With sorrowful voice to all who pass, —
“Forever — never!
Never — forever!”

10

15

By day its voice is low and light;
But in the silent dead of night,

Distinct as a passing footstep's fall,
It echoes along the vacant hall, 20
Along the ceiling, along the floor,
And seems to say, at each chamber-door, —
 "Forever — never !
 Never — forever !"

Through days of sorrow and of mirth, 25
Through days of death and days of birth,
Through every swift vicissitude
Of changeful time, unchanged it has stood,
And as if, like God, it all things saw,
It calmly repeats those words of awe, — 30
 "Forever — never !
 Never — forever !"

In that mansion used to be
Free-hearted Hospitality ;
His great fires up the chimney roared ; 35
The stranger feasted at his board ;
But, like the skeleton at the feast,
That warning timepiece never ceased, —
 "Forever — never !
 Never — forever !" 40

There groups of merry children played,
There youths and maidens dreaming strayed ;
O precious hours ! O golden prime,
And affluence of love and time !
Even as a miser counts his gold, 45
Those hours the ancient timepiece told, —
 "Forever — never !
 Never — forever !"

From that chamber, clothed in white,
The bride came forth on her wedding night; 50
There, in that silent room below,
The dead lay in his shroud of snow;
And in the hush that followed the prayer,
Was heard the old clock on the stair, —
“Forever — never!” 55
Never — forever!”

All are scattered now and fled,
Some are married, some are dead;
And when I ask, with throbs of pain,
“Ah! when shall they all meet again?” 60
As in the days long since gone by,
The ancient timepiece makes reply, —
“Forever — never!”
Never — forever!”

Never here, forever there, 65
Where all parting, pain, and care,
And death, and time shall disappear, —
Forever there, but never here!
The horologe of Eternity°
Sayeth this incessantly, — 70
“Forever — never!”
Never — forever!”

THE ARROW AND THE SONG°

I SHOT an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
 It fell to earth, I knew not where;
 For who has sight so keen and strong,
 That it can follow the flight of song? 5

Long, long afterward, in an oak
 I found the arrow, still unbroke;
 And the song, from beginning to end,
 I found again in the heart of a friend. 10

AUTUMN

THOU comest, Autumn, heralded by the rain,
 With banners, by great gales incessant fanned,
 Brighter than brightest silks of Samarcand,^o
 And stately oxen harnessed to thy wain!
 Thou standest, like imperial Charlemagne,^o 5
 Upon thy bridge of gold; thy royal hand
 Outstretched with benedictions o'er the land,
 Blessing the farms through all thy vast domain!
 Thy shield is the red harvest moon, suspended^o
 So long beneath the heaven's o'erhanging eaves; 10
 Thy steps are by the farmer's prayers attended;
 Like flames upon an altar shine the sheaves;
 And, following thee, in thy ovation splendid,
 Thine almoner, the wind, scatters the golden leaves!

DANTE^o

TUSCAN, that wanderest through the realms of gloom,
 With thoughtful pace, and sad, majestic eyes,
 Stern thoughts and awful from thy soul arise,
 Like Farinata from his fiery tomb.^o

Thy sacred song is like the trump of doom; 5
Yet in thy heart what human sympathies,
What soft compassion glows, as in the skies
The tender stars their clouded lamps relume !
Methinks I see thee stand with pallid cheeks
By Fra Hilario in his diocese, 10
As up the convent-walls, in golden streaks,
The ascending sunbeams mark the day's decrease;
And, as he asks what there the stranger seeks,
Thy voice along the cloister whispers "Peace!"

CURFEW

I

SOLEMNLY, mournfully,
Dealing its dole,
The Curfew Bell°
Is beginning to toll.

Cover the embers, 5
And put out the light;
Toil comes with the morning,
And rest with the night.

Dark grow the windows,
And quenched is the fire; 10
Sound fades into silence, —
All footsteps retire.

No voice in the chambers,
No sound in the hall !
Sleep and oblivion 15
Reign over all !

II

The book is completed,
And closed, like the day;
And the hand that has written it
Lays it away.

20

Dim grows its fancies;
Forgotten they lie;
Like coals in the ashes,
They darken and die.

Song sinks into silence,
The story is told,
The windows are darkened,
The hearth-stone is cold.

25

Darker and darker
The black shadows fall;
Sleep and oblivion
Reign over all.

30

THE BUILDING OF THE SHIP°

“BUILD me straight, O worthy Master!
Stanch and strong, a goodly vessel,
That shall laugh at all disaster,
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!”

The merchant's word
Delighted the Master heard;

5

For his heart was in his work, and the heart
Giveth grace unto every Art.

A quiet smile played round his lips,
As the eddies and dimples of the tide
Play round the bows of ships,
That steadily at anchor ride. 10

And with a voice that was full of glee,
He answered, " Erelong we will launch
A vessel as goodly, and strong, and stanch,
As ever weathered a wintry sea ! " 15

And first with nicest skill and art,
Perfect and finished in every part,
A little model the Master wrought,
Which should be to the larger plan 20

What the child is to the man,
Its counterpart in miniature ;
That with a hand more swift and sure
The greater labor might be brought
To answer to his inward thought. 25

And as he labored, his mind ran o'er
The various ships that were built of yore,
And above them all, and strangest of all
Towered the Great Harry, ° crank ° and tall,
Whose picture was hanging on the wall, 30

With bows and stern raised high in air,
And balconies hanging here and there,
And signal lanterns and flags afloat,
And eight round towers, like those that frown
From some old castle, looking down
Upon the drawbridge and the moat. 35

And he said with a smile, " Our ship, I wis, °
Shall be of another form than this ! " °
It was of another form, indeed ;

Built for freight, and yet for speed, 40
A beautiful and gallant craft;
Broad in the beam, that the stress of the blast,
Pressing down upon sail and mast,
Might not the sharp bows overwhelm;
Broad in the beam, but sloping aft 45
With graceful curve and slow degrees,
That she might be docile to the helm,
And that the currents of parted seas,
Closing behind, with mighty force,
Might aid and not impede her course. 50

In the shipyard stood the Master,
With the model of the vessel,
That should laugh at all disaster,
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!

Covering many a rood of ground, 55
Lay the timber piled around;
Timber of chestnut, and elm, and oak,
And scattered here and there, with these,
The knarred and crooked cedar knees;
Brought from regions far away, 60
From Pascagoula's sunny bay,^o
And the banks of the roaring Roanoke^o!
Ah! what a wondrous thing it is
To note how many wheels of toil
One thought, one word, can set in motion! 65
There's not a ship that sails the ocean,
But every climate, every soil,
Must bring its tribute, great or small,
And help to build the wooden wall^o!

The sun was rising o'er the sea, 70
And long the level shadows lay,
As if they, too, the beams would be
Of some great, airy argosy,^o
Framed and launched in a single day.
That silent architect, the sun, 75
Had hewn and laid them every one,
Ere the work of man was yet begun.
Beside the Master, when he spoke,
A youth, against an anchor leaning,
Listened, to catch his slightest meaning. 80
Only the long waves, as they broke
In ripples on the pebbly beach,
Interrupted the old man's speech.

Beautiful they were, in sooth,
The old man and the fiery youth! 85
The old man, in whose busy brain
Many a ship that sailed the main
Was modelled o'er and o'er again; —
The fiery youth, who was to be
The heir of his dexterity, 90
The heir of his house, and his daughter's hand,
When he had built and launched from land
What the elder head had planned.

"Thus," said he, "will we build this ship!
Lay square the blocks upon the slip,^o 95
And follow well this plan of mine.
Choose the timbers with greatest care;
Of all that is unsound beware;
For only what is sound and strong
To this vessel shall belong. 100

Cedar of Maine and Georgia pine
Here together shall combine.
A goodly frame, and a goodly fame,
And the UNION be her name!
For the day that gives her to the sea
Shall give my daughter unto thee!" 105

The Master's word
Enraptured the young man heard;
And as he turned his face aside,
With a look of joy and a thrill of pride, 110
Standing before
Her father's door,
He saw the form of his promised bride.
The sun shone on her golden hair,
And her cheek was glowing fresh and fair, 115
With the breath of morn and the soft sea air.
Like a beauteous barge was she,
Still at rest on the sandy beach,
Just beyond the billow's reach;
But he 120
Was the restless, seething, stormy sea!
Ah, how skilful grows the hand
That obeyeth Love's command!
It is the heart, and not the brain,
That to the highest doth attain, 125
And he who followeth Love's behest
Far exceedeth all the rest!"

Thus with the rising of the sun
Was the noble task begun,
And soon throughout the shipyard's bounds 130
Were heard the intermingled sounds

Of axes and of mallets, plied
With vigorous arms on every side;
Plied so deftly and so well,
That, ere the shadows of evening fell, 135
The keel of oak for a noble ship,
Scarfed^o and bolted, straight and strong,
Was lying ready, and stretched along
The blocks, well placed upon the slip.
Happy, thrice happy, every one 140
Who sees his labor well begun,
And not perplexed and multiplied,
By idly waiting for time and tide !

And when the hot, long day was o'er,
The young man at the Master's door 145
Sat with the maiden calm and still,
And within the porch, a little more
Removed beyond the evening chill,
The father sat, and told them tales
Of wrecks in the great September gales, 150
Of pirates upon the Spanish Main,
And ships that never came back again,
The chance and change of a sailor's life,
Want and plenty, rest and strife,
His roving fancy, like the wind, 155
That nothing can stay and nothing can bind,
And the magic charm of foreign lands,
With shadows of palms, and shining sands,
Where the tumbling surf,
O'er the coral reefs of Madagascar,^o 160
Washes the feet of the swarthy Lascar,^o
As he lies alone and asleep on the turf.
And the trembling maiden held her breath

At the tales of that awful, pitiless sea,
With all its terror and mystery, 165
The dim, dark sea, so like unto Death,
That divides and yet unites mankind !
And whenever the old man paused, a gleam
From the bowl of his pipe would awhile illumine .
The silent group in the twilight gloom, 170
And thoughtful faces, as in a dream ;
And for a moment one might mark
What had been hidden by the dark,
That the head of the maiden lay at rest,
Tenderly, on the young man's breast ! 175

Day by day the vessel grew,
With timbers fashioned strong and true,
Stemson and keelson and sternson-knee,^o
Till, framed with perfect symmetry,
A skeleton ship rose up to view ! 180
And around the bows and along the side
The heavy hammers and mallets plied,
Till after many a week, at length,
Wonderful for form and strength,
Sublime in its enormous bulk, 185
Loomed aloft the shadowy hulk !
And around it columns of smoke, upwreathing,
Rose from the boiling, bubbling, seething
Caldron, that glowed,
And overflowed 190
With the black tar, heated for the sheathing.
And amid the clamors
Of clattering hammers,
He who listened heard now and then
The song of the Master and his men : — 195

“Build me straight, O worthy Master,
Stanch and strong, a goodly vessel,
That shall laugh at all disaster
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle !”

With oaken brace and copper band, 200
Lay the rudder on the sand,
That, like a thought, should have control
Over the movement of the whole ;
And near it the anchor, whose giant hand
Would reach down and grapple with the land, 205
And immovable and fast
Hold the great ship against the bellowing blast !
And at the bows an image stood,
By a cunning artist carved in wood,
With robes of white, that far behind 210
Seemed to be fluttering in the wind.
It was not shaped in a classic mould,
Not like a Nymph or Goddess of old,
Or Naiad rising from the water, °
But modelled from the Master's daughter ! 215
On many a dreary and misty night,
'Twill be seen by the rays of the signal light,
Speeding along through the rain and the dark,
Like a ghost in its snow-white sark, °
The pilot of some phantom bark, 220
Guiding the vessel, in its flight,
By a path none other knows aright !

Behold, at last,
Each tall and tapering mast
Is swung into its place 225

Shrouds and stays
Holding it firm and fast !

Long ago,
In the deer-haunted forests of Maine,
When upon mountain and plain 230
Lay the snow,
They fell, — those lordly pines !
Those grand, majestic pines !
'Mid shouts and cheers
The jaded steers, 235
Panting beneath the goad,
Dragged down the weary, winding road
Those captive kings so straight and tall,
To be shorn of their streaming hair,
And naked and bare, 240
To feel the stress and the strain
Of the wind and the reeling main,
Whose roar
Would remind them forevermore
Of their native forests they should not see
again. 245

And everywhere
The slender, graceful spars
Poise aloft in the air,
And at the mast-head,
White, blue, and red, 250
A flag unrolls the stripes and stars.
Ah ! when the wanderer, lonely, friendless,
In foreign harbors shall behold
That flag unrolled,
'Twill be as a friendly hand 255

Stretched out from his native land,
Filling his heart with memories sweet and endless !

All is finished ! and at length
Has come the bridal day
Of beauty and of strength. 260
To-day the vessel shall be launched !
With fleecy clouds the sky is blanched,
And o'er the bay,
Slowly, in all his splendors dight,
The great sun rises to behold the sight. 265
The ocean old,
Centuries old,
Strong as youth, and as uncontrolled,
Paces restless to and fro,
Up and down the sands of gold. 270
His beating heart is not at rest ;
And far and wide,
With ceaseless flow,
His beard of snow
Heaves with the heaving of his breast. 275
He waits impatient for his bride.
There she stands,
With her foot upon the sands,
Decked with flags and streamers gay,
In honor of her marriage day, 280
Her snow-white signals fluttering, blending,
Round her like a veil descending,
Ready to be
The bride of the gray old sea.

On the deck another bride 285
Is standing by her lover's side.

Shadows from the flags and shrouds,
Like the shadows cast by clouds,
Broken by many a sudden fleck,
Fall around them on the deck. 290

The prayer is said,
The service read,
The joyous bridegroom bows his head;
And in tears the good old Master
Shakes the brown hand of his son, 295
Kisses his daughter's glowing cheek
In silence, for he cannot speak,
And ever faster

Down his own the tears begin to run.
The worthy pastor — 300

The shepherd of that wandering flock,
That has the ocean for its wold,
That has the vessel for its fold,
Leaping ever from rock to rock —
Spake, with accents mild and clear, 305
Words of warning, words of cheer,
But tedious to the bridegroom's ear.

He knew the chart
Of the sailor's heart,
All its pleasures and its griefs, 310
All its shallows and rocky reefs,
All those secret currents, that flow
With such resistless undertow,
And lift and drift, with terrible force,
The will from its moorings and its course. 315
Therefore he spake, and thus said he: —

“ Like unto ships far off at sea,
Outward or homeward bound, are we.

Before, behind, and all around,
Floats and swings the horizon's bound, 320
Seems at its distant rim to rise
And climb the crystal wall of the skies,
And then again to turn and sink,
As if we could slide from its outer brink.
Ah! it is not the sea, 325
It is not the sea that sinks and shelves,
But ourselves
That rock and rise
With endless and uneasy motion,
Now touching the very skies, 330
Now sinking into the depths of ocean.
Ah! if our souls but poise and swing
Like the compass in its brazen ring,
Ever level and ever true
To the toil and the task we have to do, 335
We shall sail securely, and safely reach
The Fortunate Isles,^o on whose shining beach
The sights we see, and the sounds we hear,
Will be those of joy and not of fear!"

Then the Master, 340
With a gesture of command,
Waved his hand;
And at the word,
Loud and sudden there was heard,
All around them and below, 345
The sound of hammers, blow on blow,
Knocking away the shores and spurs.^o
And see! she stirs!
She starts, — she moves, — she seems to feel
The thrill of life along her keel, 350

And, spurning with her foot the ground,
With one exulting, joyous bound,
She leaps into the ocean's arms!
And lo! from the assembled crowd
There rose a shout, prolonged and loud, 355
That to the ocean seemed to say,
"Take her, O bridegroom, old and gray,
Take her to thy protecting arms,
With all her youth and all her charms!"

How beautiful she is! How fair 360
She lies within those arms, that press
Her form with many a soft caress
Of tenderness and watchful care!
Sail forth into the sea, O ship!
Through wind and wave, right onward steer! 365
The moistened eye, the trembling lip,
Are not the signs of doubt or fear.

Sail forth into the sea of life,
O gentle, loving, trusting wife,
And safe from all adversity 370
Upon the bosom of that sea
Thy comings and thy goings be!
For gentleness and love and trust
Prevail o'er angry wave and gust!
And in the wreck of noble lives 375
Something immortal still survives!

Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O UNION, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years, 380
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!

We know what Master laid thy keel,
 What Workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,
 Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,
 What anvils rang, what hammers beat, 385
 In what a forge and what a heat
 Were shaped the anchors of thy hope !
 Fear not each sudden sound and shock,
 'Tis of the wave and not the rock ;
 'Tis but the flapping of the sail, 390
 And not a rent made by the gale !
 In spite of rock and tempest's roar,
 In spite of false lights on the shore,
 Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea !
 Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee, 395
 Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
 Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
 Are all with thee, — are all with thee !

 SEAWEED

WHEN descends on the Atlantic
 The gigantic
 Storm-wind of the equinox,°
 Landward in his wrath he scourges
 The toiling surges, 5
 Laden with seaweed from the rocks :
 From Bermuda's reefs ; from edges
 Of sunken ledges,
 In some far-off, bright Azore ;
 From Bahama, and the dashing, 10
 Silver-flashing
 Surges of San Salvador ;

From the tumbling surf, that buries
The Orkneyan skerries,^o
Answering the hoarse Hebrides; 15
And from wrecks of ships, and drifting
Spars, uplifting
On the desolate, rainy seas; —

Ever drifting, drifting, drifting
On the shifting - 20
Currents of the restless main;
Till in sheltered coves, and reaches
Of sandy beaches,
All have found repose again.

So when storms of wild emotion 25
Strike the ocean
Of the poet's soul, erelong
From each cave and rocky fastness,
In its vastness,
Floats some fragment of a song: 30

From the far-off isles enchanted,
Heaven has planted
With the golden fruit of Truth;
From the flashing surf, whose vision
Gleams Elysian 35
In the tropic clime of Youth;

From the strong Will, and the Endeavor
That forever
Wrestle with the tides of Fate;
From the wreck of Hopes far-scattered, 40
Tempest-shattered,
Floating waste and desolate; —

Ever drifting; drifting, drifting
On the shifting
Currents of the restless heart; 45
Till at length in books recorded,
They, like hoarded
Household words, no more depart.

THE SECRET OF THE SEA

Ah! what pleasant visions haunt me
As I gaze upon the sea!
All the old romantic legends,
All my dreams, come back to me.

Sails of silk and ropes of sandal, 5
Such as gleam in ancient lore;
And the singing of the sailors,
And the answer from the shore!

Most of all, the Spanish ballad
Haunts me oft, and tarries long, 10
Of the noble Count Arnaldos
And the sailor's mystic song.

Like the long waves on a sea-beach,
Where the sand as silver shines,
With a soft, monotonous cadence, 15
Flow its unrhymed lyric lines; —

Telling how the Count Arnaldos,
With his hawk upon his hand,
Saw a fair and stately galley,
Steering onward to the land; — 20

How he heard the ancient helmsman
Chant a song so wild and clear,
That the sailing sea-bird slowly
Poised upon the mast to hear,

Till his soul was full of longing, 25
And he cried, with impulse strong, —
“ Helmsman ! for the love of heaven,
Teach me, too, that wondrous song ! ”

“ Wouldst thou, ” — so the helmsman answered,
“ Learn the secret of the sea ? 30
Only those who brave its dangers
Comprehend its mystery ! ”

In each sail that skims the horizon,
In each landward-blowing breeze,
I behold that stately galley, 35
Hear those mournful melodies ;

Till my soul is full of longing
For the secret of the sea,
And the heart of the great ocean
Sends a thrilling pulse through me. 40

TWILIGHT

THE twilight is sad and cloudy,
The wind blows wild and free,
And like the wings of sea-birds
Flash the white caps of the sea.

But in the fisherman's cottage
There shines a ruddier light,
And a little face at the window
Peers out into the night. 5

Close, close it is pressed to the window,
As if those childish eyes
Were looking into the darkness
To see some form arise. 10

And a woman's waving shadow
Is passing to and fro,
Now rising to the ceiling,
Now bowing and bending low. 15

What tale do the roaring ocean,
And the night-wind, bleak and wild,
As they beat at the crazy casement,
Tell to that little child? 20

And why do the roaring ocean,
And the night-wind, wild and bleak,
As they beat at the heart of the mother
Drive the color from her cheek?

SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT°

SOUTHWARD with fleet of ice
Sailed the corsair Death°;
Wild and fast blew the blast,
And the east-wind was his breath.

His lordly ships of ice 5
Glisten in the sun;
On each side, like pennons wide,
Flashing crystal streamlets run.

His sails of white sea-mist 10
Dripped with silver rain;
But where he passed there were cast
Leaden shadows o'er the main.

Eastward from Campobello° 15
Sir Humphrey Gilbert sailed;
Three days or more seaward he bore,
Then, alas! the land-wind failed.

Alas! the land-wind failed,
And ice-cold grew the night;
And nevermore, on sea or shore,
Should Sir Humphrey see the light. 20

He sat upon the deck,
The Book was in his hand;
"Do not fear! Heaven is as near,"
He said, "by water as by land!"

In the first watch of the night, 25
Without a signal's sound,
Out of the sea, mysteriously,
The fleet of Death rose all around.

The moon and the evening star 30
Were hanging in the shrouds;
Every mast, as it passed,
Seemed to rake the passing clouds.

They grappled with their prize,
At midnight black and cold !
As of a rock was the shock ;
Heavily the ground-swell rolled.° 35

Southward through day and dark,
They drift in close embrace,
With mist and rain to the Spanish Main,°
Yet there seems no change of place. 40

Southward, forever southward,
They drift through dark and day ;
And like a dream, in the Gulf-Stream
Sinking, vanish all away.

THE LIGHTHOUSE°

THE rocky ledge runs far into the sea,
And on its outer point, some miles away,
The Lighthouse lifts its massive masonry,
A pillar of fire by night, of cloud by day.°

Even at this distance I can see the tides,
Upheaving, break unheard along its base,
A speechless wrath, that rises and subsides
In the white lip and tremor of the face. 5

And as the evening darkens, lo ! how bright,
Through the deep purple of the twilight air,
Beams forth the sudden radiance of its light
With strange, unearthly splendor in the glare ! 10

Not one alone; from each projecting cape
And perilous reef along the ocean's verge,
Starts into life a dim, gigantic shape, 15
Holding its lantern o'er the restless surge.

Like the great giant Christopher^o it stands
Upon the brink of the tempestuous wave,
Wading far out among the rocks and sands,
The night-o'ertaken mariner to save. 20

And the great ships sail outward and return,
Bending and bowing o'er the billowy swells,
And ever joyful, as they see it burn,
They wave their silent welcomes and farewells.

They come forth from the darkness, and their sails 25
Gleam for a moment only in the blaze,
And eager faces, as the light unveils,
Gaze at the tower, and vanish while they gaze.

The mariner remembers when a child,
On his first voyage, he saw it fade and sink; 30
And when, returning from adventures wild,
He saw it rise again o'er ocean's brink.

Steadfast, serene, immovable, the same
Year after year, through all the silent night
Burns on forevermore that quenchless flame, 35
Shines on that inextinguishable light!

It sees the ocean to its bosom clasp
The rocks and sea-sand with the kiss of peace;
It sees the wild winds lift it in their grasp,
And hold it up, and shake it like a fleece. 40

The startled waves leap over it; the storm
Smites it with all the scourges of the rain,
And steadily against its solid form
Press the great shoulders of the hurricane.

The sea-bird wheeling round it, with the din 45
Of wings and winds and solitary cries,
Blinded and maddened by the light within,
Dashes himself against the glare, and dies.

A new Prometheus, chained upon the rock,^o
Still grasping in his hand the fire of Jove, 50
It does not hear the cry, nor heed the shock,
But hails the mariner with words of love.

“Sail on!” it says, “sail on, ye stately ships!
And with your floating bridge the ocean span;
Be mine to guard this light from all eclipse, 55
Be yours to bring man nearer unto man!”

THE FIRE OF DRIFT-WOOD

WE sat within the farm-house old,
Whose windows, looking o’er the bay,
Gave to the sea-breeze, damp and cold
An easy entrance, night and day.

Not far away we saw the port, 5
The strange, old-fashioned, silent town,
The lighthouse, the dismantled fort,
The wooden houses, quaint and brown.

We sat and talked until the night,
Descending, filled the little room; 10
Our faces faded from the sight,
Our voices only broke the gloom.

We spake of many a vanished scene,
Of what we once had thought and said,
Of what had been, and might have been, 15
And who was changed, and who was dead;

And all that fills the hearts of friends,
When first they feel, with secret pain,
Their lives thenceforth have separate ends,
And never can be one again; 20

The first slight swerving of the heart,
That words are powerless to express,
And leave it still unsaid in part,
Or say it in too great excess.

The very tones in which we spake 25
Had something strange, I could but mark;
The leaves of memory seemed to make
A mournful rustling in the dark.

Oft died the words upon our lips,
As suddenly, from out the fire 30
Built of the wreck of stranded ships,
The flames would leap and then expire.

And, as their splendor flashed and failed,
We thought of wrecks upon the main,
Of ships dismasted, that were hailed 35
And sent no answer back again.

The windows, rattling in their frames,
The ocean, roaring up the beach,
The gusty blast, the bickering flames,
All mingled vaguely in our speech; 40

Until they made themselves a part
Of fancies floating through the brain,
The long-lost ventures of the heart,
That send no answers back again.

O flames that glowed ! O hearts that yearned ! 45
They were indeed too much akin,
The drift-wood fire without that burned,
The thoughts that burned and glowed within.

RESIGNATION

THERE is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there !
THERE is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair !

The air is full of farewells to the dying, 5
And mournings for the dead ;
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
Will not be comforted° !

Let us be patient ! These severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise,° 10
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapors
Amid these earthly damps.
What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers 15
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no Death ! What seems so is transition.
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we call Death. 20

She is not dead, — the child of our affection, —
But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion, 25
By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air; 30
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken, 35
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her;
For when with raptures wild
In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a child; 40

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face.

And though at times impetuous with emotion 45
And anguish long suppressed,
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,
That cannot be at rest, —

We will be patient, and assuage the feeling
We may not wholly stay; 50
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
The grief that must have way.

THE BUILDERS°

ALL are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

Nothing useless is, or low; 5
Each thing in its place is best;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest.

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled; 10
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

Truly shape and fashion these ;
Leave no yawning gaps between ;
Think not, because no man sees, 15
Such things will remain unseen.

In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part ;
For the Gods see everywhere. 20

Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen ;
Make the house, where Gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean.

Else our lives are incomplete, 25
Standing in these walls of Time,
Broken stairways, where the feet
Stumble as they seek to climb.

Build to-day, then, strong and sure,
With a firm and ample base ; 30
And ascending and secure
Shall to-morrow find its place.

Thus alone can we attain
To those turrets, where the eye
Sees the world as one vast plain, 35
And one boundless reach of sky.

BIRDS OF PASSAGE

BLACK shadows fall
From the lindens tall,
That lift aloft their massive wall
 Against the southern sky;

And from the realms
Of the shadowy elms
A tide-like darkness overwhelms
 The fields that round us lie.

5

But the night is fair,
And everywhere
A warm, soft vapor fills the air,
 And distant sounds seem near;

10

And above, in the light
Of the star-lit night,
Swift birds of passage wing their flight
 Through the dewy atmosphere.

15

I hear the beat
Of their pinions fleet,
As from the land of snow and sleet
 They seek a southern lea.

20

I hear the cry
Of their voices high
Falling dreamily through the sky,
 But their forms I cannot see.

O, say not so ! 25
Those sounds that flow
In murmurs of delight and woe
Come not from wings of birds.

They are the throngs
Of the poet's songs, 30
Murmurs of pleasures, and pains, and wrongs,
The sound of wingèd words.

This is the cry
Of souls, that high
On toiling, beating pinions, fly, 35
Seeking a warmer clime.

From their distant flight
Through realms of light
It falls into our world of night,
With the murmuring sound of rhyme. 40

GASPAR BECERRA°

By his evening fire the artist
Pondered o'er his secret shame;
Baffled, weary, and disheartened,
Still he mused, and dreamed of fame.

'Twas an image of the Virgin 5
That had tasked his utmost skill;
But alas ! his fair ideal
Vanished and escaped him still.

From a distant Eastern island
Had the precious wood been brought; 10
Day and night the anxious master
At his toil untiring wrought;

Till, discouraged and desponding,
Sat he now in shadows deep,
And the day's humiliation 15
Found oblivion in sleep.

Then a voice cried, "Rise, O master!
From the burning brand of oak
Shape the thought that stirs within thee!" —
And the startled artist woke, — 20

Woke, and from the smoking embers
Seized and quenched the glowing wood;
And therefrom he carved an image,
And he saw that it was good.

O thou sculptor, painter, poet! 25
Take this lesson to thy heart:
That is best which lieth nearest;
Shape from that thy work of art.

PEGASUS IN POUND°

ONCE into a quiet village,
Without haste and without heed,
In the golden prime of morning,
Strayed the poet's wingèd steed.

It was Autumn, and incessant
Piped the quails from shocks and sheaves,
And, like living coals, the apples
Burned among the withering leaves. 5

Loud the clamorous bell was ringing
From its belfry gaunt and grim;
'Twas the daily call to labor,
Not a triumph meant for him. 10

Not the less he saw the landscape,
In its gleaming vapor veiled;
Not the less he breathed the odors
That the dying leaves exhaled. 15

Thus, upon the village common,
By the school-boys he was found;
And the wise men, in their wisdom,
Put him straightway into pound. 20

Then the sombre village crier,
Ringing loud his brazen bell,
Wandered down the street proclaiming
There was an estray to sell.

And the curious country people,
Rich and poor, and young and old,
Came in haste to see this wondrous
Wingèd steed, with mane of gold. 25

Thus the day passed, and the evening
Fell, with vapors cold and dim;
But it brought no food nor shelter,
Brought no straw nor stall, for him. 30

Patiently, and still expectant,
Looked he through the wooden bars,
Saw the moon rise o'er the landscape, 35
Saw the tranquil, patient stars;

Till at length the bell at midnight
Sounded from its dark abode,
And, from out a neighboring farm-yard,
Loud the cock Alectryon crowed.° 40

Then, with nostrils wide distended,
Breaking from his iron chain,
And unfolding far his pinions,
To those stars he soared again.

On the morrow, when the village 45
Woke to all its toil and care,
Lo! the strange steed had departed,
And they knew not when nor where.

But they found, upon the greensward
Where his struggling hoofs had trod, 50
Pure and bright, a fountain flowing
From the hoof-marks in the sod.

From that hour, the fount unfailing
Gladdens the whole region round,
Strengthening all who drink its waters, 55
While it soothes them with its sound.

THE SINGERS°

God sent his Singers upon earth
With songs of sadness and of mirth,
That they might touch the hearts of men,
And bring them back to heaven again.

The first, a youth, with soul of fire, 5
Held in his hand a golden lyre;
Through groves he wandered, and by streams,
Playing the music of our dreams.

The second, with a bearded face, 10
Stood singing in the market-place,
And stirred with accents deep and loud
The hearts of all the listening crowd.

A gray old man, the third and last, 15
Sang in cathedrals dim and vast,
While the majestic organ rolled
Contrition from its mouths of gold.

And those who heard the Singers three
Disputed which the best might be;
For still their music seemed to start
Discordant echoes in each heart. 20

But the great Master said, "I see
No best in kind, but in degree;
I gave a various gift to each,
To charm, to strengthen, and to teach.

“These are the three great chords of might, 25
And he whose ear is tuned aright
Will hear no discord in the three,
But the most perfect harmony.”

PROMETHEUS°

OR THE POET'S FORETHOUGHT

OF Prometheus, how undaunted
On Olympus' shining bastions°
His audacious foot he planted,
Myths are told and songs are chanted,
Full of promptings and suggestions. 5

Beautiful is the tradition
Of that flight through heavenly portals,
The old classic superstition
Of the theft and the transmission
Of the fire of the Immortals! 10

First the deed of noble daring,
Born of heavenward aspiration,
Then the fire with mortals sharing,
Then the vulture, — the despairing
Cry of pain on crags Caucasian. 15

All is but a symbol painted
Of the Poet, Prophet, Seer;
Only those are crowned and sainted
Who with grief have been acquainted,
Making nations nobler, freer. 20

In their feverish exultations,
In their triumph and their yearning,
In their passionate pulsations,
In their words among the nations,
The Promethean fire is burning. 25

Shall it, then, be unavailing,
All this toil for human culture?
Through the cloud-rack, dark and trailing,
Must they see above them sailing
O'er life's barren crags the vulture? 30

Such a fate as this was Dante's,^o
By defeat and exile maddened;
Thus were Milton and Cervantes,^o
Nature's priests and Corybantes,^o
By affliction touched and saddened. 35

But the glories so transcendent
That around their memories cluster,
And, on all their steps attendant,
Make their darkened lives resplendent
With such gleams of inward lustre! 40

All the melodies mysterious,
Through the dreary darkness chanted;
Thoughts in attitudes imperious,
Voices soft, and deep, and serious,
Words that whispered, songs that haunted! 45

All the soul in rapt suspension,
All the quivering, palpitating
Chords of life in utmost tension,
With the fervor of invention,
With the rapture of creating! 50

Ah, Prometheus ! heaven-scaling !

In such hours of exultation
Even the faintest heart, unquailing,
Might behold the vulture sailing
Round the cloudy crags Caucasian !

55

Though to all there is not given
Strength for such sublime endeavor,
Thus to scale the walls of heaven,
And to leaven with fiery leaven,
All the hearts of men forever ;

60

Yet all bards, whose hearts unblighted
Honor and believe the presage,
Hold aloft their torches lighted,
Gleaming through the realms benighted,
As they onward bear the message !

65

EPIMETHEUS°

OR THE POET'S AFTERTHOUGHT

HAVE I dreamed ? or was it real,

What I saw as in a vision,
When to marches hymeneal°

In the land of the Ideal

Moved my thought o'er Fields Elysian ?

5

What ! are these the guests whose glances

Seemed like sunshine gleaming round me ?

These the wild, bewildering fancies,

That with dithyrambic dances°

As with magic circles bound me ?

10

Ah ! how cold are their caresses !

Pallid cheeks, and haggard bosoms !
Spectral gleam their snow-white dresses,
And from loose, dishevelled tresses
Fall the hyacinthine blossoms !

15

O my songs ! whose winsome measures
Filled my heart with secret rapture !
Children of my golden leisures !
Must even your delights and pleasures
Fade and perish with the capture ?

20

Fair they seemed, those songs sonorous,
When they came to me unbidden ;
Voices single, and in chorus,
Like the wild birds singing o'er us
In the dark of branches hidden.

25

Disenchantment ! Disillusion !
Must each noble aspiration
Come at last to this conclusion,
Jarring discord, wild confusion,
Lassitude, renunciation ?

30

Not with steeper fall nor faster,
From the sun's serene dominions,
Not through brighter realms nor vaster,
In swift ruin and disaster,
Icarus fell with shattered pinions° !

35

Sweet Pandora ! dear Pandora° !
Why did mighty Jove create thee°
Coy as Thetis, fair as Flora,°

Beautiful as young Aurora,^o
If to win thee is to hate thee? 40

No, not hate thee! for this feeling
Of unrest and long resistance
Is but passionate appealing,
A prophetic whisper stealing
O'er the chords of our existence. 45

Him whom thou dost once enamour,
Thou, beloved, never leavest;
In life's discord, strife, and clamor,
Still he feels thy spell of glamour;
Him of Hope thou ne'er bereavest. 50

Weary hearts by thee are lifted,
Struggling souls by thee are strengthened,
Clouds of fear asunder rifted,
Truth from falsehood cleansed and sifted,
Lives, like days in summer, lengthened! 55

Therefore art thou ever dearer,
O my Sibyl, my deceiver^o!
For thou makest each mystery clearer,
And the unattained seems nearer,
When thou fillest my heart with fever! 60

Muse of all the Gifts and Graces!
Though the fields around us wither,
There are ampler realms and spaces,
Where no foot has left its traces:
Let us turn and wander thither! 65

THE LADDER OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

SAINT AUGUSTINE! well hast thou said,^o
That of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame!

All common things, each day's events, 5
That with the hour begin and end,
Our pleasures and our discontents,
Are rounds by which we may ascend.

The low desire, the base design,
That makes another's virtues less; 10
The revel of the ruddy wine,
And all occasions of excess;

The longing for ignoble things;
The strife for triumph more than truth;
The hardening of the heart, that brings 15
Irreverence for the dreams of youth;

All thoughts of ill; all evil deeds,
That have their root in thoughts of ill;
Whatever hinders or impedes
The action of the nobler will; — 20

All these must first be trampled down
Beneath our feet, if we would gain
In the bright fields of fair renown
The right of eminent domain.

We have not wings, we cannot soar; 25
But we have feet to scale and climb
By slow degrees, by more and more,
The cloudy summits of our time.

The mighty pyramids of stone
That wedge-like cleave the desert airs, 30
When nearer seen, and better known,
Are but gigantic flights of stairs.

The distant mountains, that uprear
Their solid bastions to the skies,
Are crossed by pathways, that appear 35
As we to higher levels rise.

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night. 40

Standing on what too long we bore
With shoulders bent and downcast eyes,
We may discern — unseen before —
A path to higher destinies.

Nor deem the irrevocable Past 45
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If, rising on its wrecks, at last
To something nobler we attain.

THE PHANTOM SHIP

IN Mather's Magnalia Christi,^o
Of the old colonial time,
May be found in prose the legend
That is here set down in rhyme.

A ship sailed from New Haven, 5
And the keen and frosty airs,
That filled her sails at parting,
Were heavy with good men's prayers.

"O Lord! if it be thy pleasure" —
Thus prayed the old divine — 10
"To bury our friends in the ocean,
Take them, for they are thine!"

But Master Lamberton muttered,
And under his breath said he,
"This ship is so crank and walty,^o 15
I fear our grave she will be!"

And the ships that came from England,
When the winter months were gone,
Brought no tidings of this vessel
Nor of Master Lamberton. 20

This put the people to praying
That the Lord would let them hear
What in his greater wisdom
He had done with friends so dear.

And at last their prayers were answered: 25

It was in the month of June,
An hour before the sunset
Of a windy afternoon,

When, steadily steering landward,
A ship was seen below, 30
And they knew it was Lamberton, Master,
Who sailed so long ago.

On she came, with a cloud of canvas,
Right against the wind that blew,
Until the eye could distinguish 35
The faces of the crew.

Then fell her straining topmasts,
Hanging tangled in the shrouds,
And her sails were loosened and lifted,
And blown away like clouds. 40

And the masts, with all their rigging,
Fell slowly, one by one,
And the hulk dilated and vanished,
As a sea-mist in the sun!

And the people who saw this marvel 45
Each said unto his friend,
That this was the mould of their vessel,
And thus her tragic end.

And the pastor of the village
Gave thanks to God in prayer, 50
That, to quiet their troubled spirits,
He had sent this Ship of Air.

THE WARDEN OF THE CINQUE PORTS°

A MIST was driving down the British Channel,
The day was just begun,
And through the window-panes, on floor and panel,
Streamed the red autumn sun.

It glanced on flowing flag and rippling pennon, 5
And the white sails of ships;
And, from the frowning rampart, the black cannon
Hailed it with feverish lips.

Sandwich and Romney, Hastings, Hithe, and Dover°
Were all alert that day, 10
To see the French war-steamers speeding over,
When the fog cleared away.

Sullen and silent, and like couchant lions,
Their cannon, through the night,
Holding their breath, had watched, in grim defiance, 15
The sea-coast opposite.

And now they roared at drum-beat from their stations
On every citadel;
Each answering each, with morning salutations,
That all was well. 20

And down the coast, all taking up the burden,
Replied the distant forts,
As if to summon from his sleep the Warden
And Lord of the Cinque Ports.°

Him shall no sunshine from the fields of azure, 25
No drum-beat from the wall,
No morning gun from the black fort's embrasure,
Awaken with its call!

No more, surveying with an eye impartial
The long line of the coast, 30
Shall the gaunt figure of the old Field Marshal
Be seen upon his post!

For in the night, unseen, a single warrior,
In sombre harness mailed,
Dreaded of man, and surnamed the Destroyer, 35
The rampant wall had scaled.

He passed into the chamber of the sleeper,
The dark and silent room,
And as he entered, darker grew, and deeper,
The silence and the gloom. 40

He did not pause to parley or dissemble,
But smote the Warden hoar;
Ah! what a blow! that made all England tremble
And groan from shore to shore.

Meanwhile, without, the surly cannon waited, 45
The sun rose bright o'erhead;
Nothing in Nature's aspect intimated
That a great man was dead.

HAUNTED HOUSES

ALL houses wherein men have lived and died
Are haunted houses. Through the open doors
The harmless phantoms on their errands glide,
With feet that make no sound upon the floors.

We meet them at the doorway, on the stair, 5
Along the passages they come and go,
Impalpable impressions on the air,
A sense of something moving to and fro.

There are more guests at table than the hosts
Invited; the illuminated hall 10
Is thronged with quiet, inoffensive ghosts,
As silent as the pictures on the wall.

The stranger at my fireside cannot see
The forms I see, nor hear the sounds I hear;
He but perceives what is; while unto me 15
All that has been is visible and clear.

We have no title-deeds to house or lands;
Owners and occupants of earlier dates
From graves forgotten stretch their dusty hands,
And hold in mortmain still their old estates.° 20

The spirit-world around this world of sense
Floats like an atmosphere, and everywhere
Wafts through these earthly mists and vapors dense
A vital breath of more ethereal air.

Our little lives are kept in equipoise 25

By opposite attractions and desires;
The struggle of the instinct that enjoys,
And the more noble instinct that aspires.

These perturbations, this perpetual jar
Of earthly wants and aspirations high, 30
Come from the influence of an unseen star,^o
An undiscovered planet in our sky.

And as the moon from some dark gate of cloud
Throws o'er the sea a floating bridge of light,
Across whose trembling planks our fancies crowd 35
Into the realm of mystery and night, —

So from the world of spirits there descends
A bridge of light, connecting it with this,
O'er whose unsteady floor, that sways and bends,
Wander our thoughts above the dark abyss. 40

IN THE CHURCHYARD AT CAMBRIDGE

In the village churchyard she lies,
Dust is in her beautiful eyes,
No more she breathes, nor feels, nor stirs;
At her feet and at her head
Lies a slave to attend the dead, 5
But their dust is white as hers.

Was she a lady of high degree,
So much in love with the vanity
And foolish pomp of this world of ours?

Or was it Christian charity,
And lowliness and humility,
The richest and rarest of all dowers? 10

Who shall tell us? No one speaks;
No color shoots into those cheeks,
Either of anger or of pride, 15
At the rude question we have asked;
Nor will the mystery be unmasked
By those who are sleeping at her side.

Hereafter? — And do you think to look
On the terrible pages of that Book 20
To find her failings, faults, and errors?
Ah, you will then have other cares,
In your own shortcomings and despairs,
In your own secret sins and terrors!

THE EMPEROR'S BIRD'S-NEST

ONCE the Emperor Charles of Spain,^o
With his swarthy, grave commanders,
I forget in what campaign,
Long besieged, in mud and rain,
Some old frontier town of Flanders. 5

Up and down the dreary camp,
In great boots of Spanish leather,
Striding with a measured tramp,
These Hidalgos, dull and damp,
Cursed the Frenchmen, cursed the weather. 10

Thus as to and fro they went
Over upland and through hollow,
Giving their impatience vent,
Perched upon the Emperor's tent,
In her nest, they spied a swallow. 15

Yes, it was a swallow's nest,
Built of clay and hair of horses,
Mane, or tail, or dragoon's crest,^o
Found on hedge-rows east and west,
After skirmish of the forces. 20

Then an old Hidalgo said,^o
As he twirled his gray mustachio,
"Sure this swallow overhead
Thinks the Emperor's tent a shed,
And the Emperor but a Macho^o!" 25

Hearing his imperial name
Coupled with those words of malice,
Half in anger, half in shame,
Forth the great campaigner came
Slowly from his canvas palace. 30

"Let no hand the bird molest,"
Said he solemnly, "nor hurt her!"
Adding then, by way of jest,
"Golondrina is my guest,^o
'Tis the wife of some deserter!" 35

Swift as bowstring speeds a shaft,
Through the camp was spread the rumor,
And the soldiers, as they quaffed
Flemish beer at dinner, laughed
At the Emperor's pleasant humor. 40

So unharmed and unafraid
 Sat the swallow still and brooded,
 Till the constant cannonade
 Through the walls a breach had made,
 And the siege was thus concluded. 45

Then the army, elsewhere bent,
 Struck its tents as if disbanding,
 Only not the Empéror's tent,
 For he ordered, ere he went,
 Very curtly, "Leave it standing!" 50

So it stood there all alone,
 Loosely flapping, torn and tattered,
 Till the brood was fledged and flown,
 Singing o'er those walls of stone
 Which the cannon-shot had shattered. 55

THE TWO ANGELS°

Two angels, one of Life and one of Death,
 Passed o'er our village as the morning broke;
 The dawn was on their faces, and beneath,
 The sombre houses hearsed with plumes of smoke.

Their attitude and aspect were the same, 5
 Alike their features and their robes of white;
 But one was crowned with amaranth, as with flame,°
 And one with asphodels, like flakes of light.°

I saw them pause on their celestial way;
 Then said I, with deep fear and doubt oppressed, 10

“Beat not so loud, my heart, lest thou betray
The place where thy beloved are at rest !”

And he who wore the crown of asphodels,
Descending, at my door began to knock,
And my soul sank within me, as in wells 15
The waters sink before an earthquake’s shock.

I recognized the nameless agony,
The terror and the tremor and the pain,
That oft before had filled or haunted me,
And now returned with three-fold strength again. 20

The door I opened to my heavenly guest,
And listened, for I thought I heard God’s voice ;
And, knowing whatsoe’er he sent was best,
Dared neither to lament nor to rejoice.

Then with a smile, that filled the house with light, 25
“My errand is not Death, but Life,” he said ;
And ere I answered, passing out of sight,
On his celestial embassy he sped.

’Twas at thy door, O friend ! and not at mine,
The angel with the amaranthine wreath, 30
Pausing, descended, and with voice divine
Whispered a word that had a sound like Death.

Then fell upon the house a sudden gloom,
A shadow on those features fair and thin ;
And softly, from that hushed and darkened room, 35
Two angels issued, where but one went in.

All is of God ! If he but wave his hand,
The mists collect, the rain falls thick and loud,
Till, with a smile of light on sea and land,
Lo ! he looks back from the departing cloud.

40

Angels of Life and Death alike are his;
Without his leave they pass no threshold o'er;
Who, then, would wish or dare, believing this,
Against his messengers to shut the door?

DAYLIGHT AND MOONLIGHT

IN broad daylight, and at noon,
Yesterday I saw the moon
Sailing high, but faint and white,
As a school-boy's paper kite.

In broad daylight, yesterday,
I read a Poet's mystic lay;
And it seemed to me at most
As a phantom, or a ghost.

5

But at length the feverish day
Like a passion died away,
And the night, serene and still,
Fell on village, vale, and hill.

10

Then the moon, in all her pride,
Like a spirit glorified,
Filled and overflowed the night
With revelations of her light.

15

And the Poet's song again
 Passed like music through my brain;
 Night interpreted to me
 All its grace and mystery.

20

THE JEWISH CEMETERY AT NEWPORT

How strange it seems! These Hebrews in their graves,
 Close by the street of this fair seaport town,
 Silent beside the never-silent waves,
 At rest in all this moving up and down!

The trees are white with dust, that o'er their sleep 5
 Wave their broad curtains in the south-wind's breath,
 While underneath such leafy tents they keep
 The long, mysterious Exodus of Death.

And these sepulchral stones, so old and brown,
 That pave with level flags their burial-place, 10
 Seem like the tablets of the Law, thrown down°
 And broken by Moses at the mountain's base.

The very names recorded here are strange,
 Of foreign accent, and of different climes;
 Alvares and Rivera interchange 15
 With Abraham and Jacob of old times.

"Blessed be God, for he created Death!"
 The mourners said, "and Death is rest and peace;"
 Then added, in the certainty of faith,
 "And giveth Life that nevermore shall cease." 20

Closed are the portals of their Synagogue,^o
No Psalms of David now the silence break,
No Rabbi reads the ancient Decalogue^o
In the grand dialect the Prophets spake.

Gone are the living, but the dead remain, 25
And not neglected; for a hand unseen,
Scattering its bounty, like a summer rain,
Still keeps their graves and their remembrance green.

How came they here? What burst of Christian hate,
What persecution, merciless and blind, 30
Drove o'er the sea — that desert desolate —
These Ishmaels and Hagars of mankind^o?

They lived in narrow streets and lanes obscure,
Ghetto and Judenstrass, in mirk and mire^o;
Taught in the school of patience to endure 35
The life of anguish and the death of fire.

All their lives long, with the unleavened bread
And bitter herbs of exile and its fears,
The wasting famine of the heart they fed,
And slaked its thirst with marah of their tears.^o 40

Anathema maranatha! was the cry^o
That rang from town to town, from street to street:
At every gate the accursed Mordecai^o
Was mocked and jeered, and spurned by Christian feet.

Pride and humiliation hand in hand 45
Walked with them through the world where'er they
went;
Trampled and beaten were they as the sand,
And yet unshaken as the continent.

For in the background figures vague and vast
Of patriarchs and of prophets rose sublime, 50
And all the great traditions of the Past
They saw reflected in the coming time.

And thus forever with reverted look
The mystic volume of the world they read,
Spelling it backward, like a Hebrew book,^o 55
Till life became a Legend of the Dead.

But ah ! what once has been shall be no more !
The groaning earth in travail and in pain
Brings forth its races, but does not restore,
And the dead nations never rise again. 60

OLIVER BASSELIN^o

In the Valley of the Vire
Still is seen an ancient mill,
With its gables quaint and queer,
And beneath the window-sill,
On the stone, 5
These words alone :
“ Oliver Basselin lived here.”

Far above it, on the steep,
Ruined stands the old Château ;
Nothing but the donjon-keep 10
Left for shelter or for show.
Its vacant eyes
Stare at the skies,
Stare at the valley green and deep.

Once a convent, old and brown, 15
 Looked, but ah ! it looks no more,
From the neighboring hillside down
 On the rushing and the roar
 Of the stream
 Whose sunny gleam 20
Cheers the little Norman town.

In that darksome mill of stone,
 To the water's dash and din,
Careless, humble, and unknown,
 Sang the poet Basselin 25
 Songs that fill
 That ancient mill
With a splendor of its own.

Never feeling of unrest
 Broke the pleasant dream he dreamed ; 30
Only made to be his nest,
 All the lovely valley seemed ;
 No desire
 Of soaring higher
Stirred or fluttered in his breast. 35

True, his songs were not divine ;
 Were not songs of that high art,
Which, as winds do in the pine,
 Find an answer in each heart ;
 But the mirth 40
 Of this green earth
Laughed and revelled in his line.

From the alehouse and the inn,
 Opening on the narrow street,

Came the loud, convivial din, 45
Singing and applause of feet,
The laughing lays
That in those days
Sang the poet Basselin.

In the castle, cased in steel, 50
Knights, who fought at Agincourt,^o
Watched and waited, spur on heel;
But the poet sang for sport
Songs that rang
Another clang, 55
Songs that lowlier hearts could feel.

In the convent, clad in gray,
Sat the monks in lonely cells,
Paced the cloisters, knelt to pray,
And the poet heard their bells; 60
But his rhymes
Found other chimes,
Nearer to the earth than they.

Gone are all the barons bold,
Gone are all the knights and squires, 65
Gone the abbot stern and cold,
And the brotherhood of friars;
Not a name
Remains to fame,
From those mouldering days of old ! 70

But the poet's memory here
Of the landscape makes a part;
Like the river, swift and clear,

Flows his song through many a heart;
Haunting still
That ancient mill
In the Valley of the Vire.

75

VICTOR GALBRAITH°

UNDER the walls of Monterey
At daybreak the bugles began to play,
Victor Galbraith!
In the mist of the morning damp and gray,
These were the words they seemed to say:
“Come forth to thy death,
Victor Galbraith!”

5

Forth he came, with a martial tread;
Firm was his step, erect his head;
Victor Galbraith,
He who so well the bugle played,
Could not mistake the words it said:
“Come forth to thy death,
Victor Galbraith!”

10

He looked at the earth, he looked at the sky,
He looked at the files of musketry,
Victor Galbraith!
And he said, with a steady voice and eye,
“Take good aim; I am ready to die!”
Thus challenges death
Victor Galbraith.

15

20

Twelve fiery tongues flashed straight and red,
Six leaden balls on their errand sped;
Victor Galbraith
Falls to the ground, but he is not dead: 25
His name was not stamped on those balls of lead,^o
And they only scath
Victor Galbraith.

Three balls are in his breast and brain,
But he rises out of the dust again, 30
Victor Galbraith !
The water he drinks has a bloody stain;
“Oh kill me, and put me out of my pain !”
In his agony prayeth
Victor Galbraith. 35

Forth dart once more those tongues of flame,
And the bugler has died a death of shame,
Victor Galbraith !
His soul has gone back to whence it came,
And no one answers to the name, 40
When the Sergeant saith,
“Victor Galbraith !”

Under the walls of Monterey
By night a bugle is heard to play,
Victor Galbraith ! 45
Through the mist of the valley damp and gray
The sentinels hear the sound, and say,
“That is the wraith
Of Victor Galbraith !”

MY LOST YOUTH

OFTEN I think of the beautiful town^o
That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,
And my youth comes back to me. 5
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still:
“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.”

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees, 10
And catch, in sudden gleams,
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
And islands that were the Hesperides^o
Of all my boyish dreams.
And the burden of that old song, 15
It murmurs and whispers still:
“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.”

I remember the black wharves and the slips,
And the sea-tides tossing free; 20
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,
And the magic of the sea.
And the voice of that wayward song
Is singing and saying still: 25
“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.”

I remember the bulwarks by the shore,
And the fort upon the hill;
The sunrise gun, with its hollow roar, 30
The drum-beat repeated o'er and o'er,
And the bugle wild and shrill.
And the music of that old song
Throbs in my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will, 35
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the sea-fight far away,°
How it thundered o'er the tide!
And the dead captains, as they lay
In their graves, o'erlooking the tranquil bay 40
Where they in battle died.
And the sound of that mournful song
Goes through me with a thrill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts." 45

I can see the breezy dome of groves,
The shadows of Deering's Woods°;
And the friendships old and the early loves
Come back with a Sabbath sound, as of doves
In quiet neighborhoods. 50
And the verse of that sweet old song,
It flutters and murmurs still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the gleams and glooms that dart. 55
Across the school-boy's brain;
The song and the silence in the heart,

That in part are prophecies, and in part
Are longings wild and vain.
And the voice of that fitful song 60
Sings on, and is never still:
“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.”

There are things of which I may not speak;
There are dreams that cannot die; 65
There are thoughts that make the strong heart weak,
And bring a pallor into the cheek,
And a mist before the eye.
And the words of that fatal song
Come over me like a chill: 70
“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.”

Strange to me now are the forms I meet
When I visit the dear old town;
But the native air is pure and sweet, 75
And the trees that o’ershadow each well-known street,
As they balance up and down,
Are singing the beautiful song,
Are sighing and whispering still:
“A boy’s will is the wind’s will, 80
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.”

And Deering’s Woods are fresh and fair
And with joy that is almost pain
My heart goes back to wander there,
And among the dreams of the days that were, 85
I find my lost youth again.
And the strange and beautiful song,

The groves are repeating it still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts." 90

THE ROPEWALK°

IN that building, long and low,
With its windows all a-row,
Like the port-holes of a hulk,
Human spiders spin and spin,
Backward down their threads so thin 5
Dropping, each a hempen bulk.

At the end, an open door;
Squares of sunshine on the floor
Light the long and dusky lane;
And the whirring of a wheel, 10
Dull and drowsy, makes me feel
All its spokes are in my brain.

As the spinners to the end
Downward go and reascend,
Gleam the long threads in the sun; 15
While within this brain of mine
Cobwebs brighter and more fine
By the busy wheel are spun.

Two fair maidens in a swing,
Like white doves upon the wing, 20
First before my vision pass;
Laughing, as their gentle hands
Closely clasp the twisted strands,
At their shadow on the grass.

Then a booth of mountebanks,^o 25
With its smell of tan and planks,
And a girl poised high in air
On a cord, in spangled dress,
With a faded loveliness,
And a weary look of care. 30

Then a homestead among farms,
And a woman with bare arms
Drawing water from a well;
As the bucket mounts apace,
With it mounts her own fair face, 35
As at some magician's spell.

Then an old man in a tower,
Ringing loud the noontide hour,
While the rope coils round and round
Like a serpent at his feet, 40
And again, in swift retreat,
Nearly lifts him from the ground.

Then within a prison-yard,
Faces fixed, and stern, and hard,
Laughter and indecent mirth; 45
Ah! it is the gallows-tree!
Breath of Christian charity,
Blow, and sweep it from the earth!

Then a school-boy, with his kite
Gleaming in a sky of light, 50
And an eager, upward look;
Steeds pursued through lane and field;
Fowlers with their snares concealed;
And an angler by a brook.

Ships rejoicing in the breeze, 55
Wrecks that float o'er unknown seas,
 Anchors dragged through faithless sand;
Sea-fog drifting overhead,
And, with lessening line and lead,
 Sailors feeling for the land. 60

All these scenes do I behold,
These, and many left untold,
 In that building long and low;
While the wheel goes round and round,
With a drowsy, dreamy sound, 65
 And the spinners backward go.

THE GOLDEN MILE-STONE

LEAFLESS are the trees; their purple branches
Spread themselves abroad, like reefs of coral,
 Rising silent
In the Red Sea of the winter sunset.

From the hundred chimneys of the village, 5
Like the Afreet in the Arabian story,^o
 Smoky columns
Tower aloft into the air of amber.

At the window winks the flickering firelight;
Here and there the lamps of evening glimmer, 10
 Social watch-fires
Answering one another through the darkness.

On the hearth the lighted logs are glowing,
And like Ariel in the cloven pine-tree°
For its freedom
Groans and sighs the air imprisoned in them.

15

By the fireside there are old men seated,
Seeing ruined cities in the ashes,
Asking sadly
Of the Past what it can ne'er restore them.

20

By the fireside there are youthful dreamers,
Building castles fair, with stately stairways,
Asking blindly
Of the Future what it cannot give them.

By the fireside tragedies are acted
In whose scenes appear two actors only,
Wife and husband,
And above them God the sole spectator.

25

By the fireside there are peace and comfort,
Wives and children, with fair, thoughtful faces,
Waiting, watching
For a well-known footstep in the passage.

30

Each man's chimney is his Golden Mile-Stone;
Is the central point, from which he measures
Every distance
Through the gateways of the world around him.

35

In his farthest wanderings still he sees it;
Hears the talking flame, the answering night-wind,
As he heard them
When he sat with those who were, but are not.

40

Happy he whom neither wealth nor fashion,
 Nor the march of the encroaching city,
 Drives an exile
 From the hearth of his ancestral homestead.

We may build more splendid habitations,
 Fill our rooms with paintings and with sculptures,
 But we cannot
 Buy with gold the old associations!

CATAWBA WINE

THIS song of mine
 Is a Song of the Vine,
 To be sung by the glowing embers
 Of wayside inns,
 When the rain begins
 To darken the drear Novembers.

It is not a song
 Of the Scuppernong,^o
 From warm Carolinian valleys,
 Nor the Isabel^o
 And the Muscadel^o
 That bask in our garden alleys,

Nor the red Mustang,^o
 Whose clusters hang
 O'er the waves of the Colorado,
 And the fiery flood
 Of whose purple blood
 Has a dash of Spanish bravado.

5

10

15

For richest and best
Is the wine of the West,
That grows by the Beautiful River;
Whose sweet perfume
Fills all the room
With a benison on the giver. 20

And as hollow trees
Are the haunts of bees,
Forever going and coming;
So this crystal hive
Is all alive
With a swarming and buzzing and humming. 25 30

Very good in its way
Is the Verzenay,^o
Or the Sillery soft and creamy^o;
But Catawba wine^o
Has a taste more divine,
More dulcet, delicious, and dreamy. 35

There grows no vine
By the haunted Rhine,
By Danube or Guadalquivir,
Nor on island or cape,
That bears such a grape
As grows by the Beautiful River. 40

Drugged is their juice
For foreign use,
When shipped o'er the reeling Atlantic,
To rack our brains
With the fever pains,
That have driven the Old World frantic. 45

To the sewers and sinks
With all such drinks, 50
And after them tumble the mixer;
For a poison malign
Is such Borgia wine,
Or at best but a Devil's Elixir.°

While pure as a spring 55
Is the wine I sing,
And to praise it, one needs but name it;
For Catawba wine
Has need of no sign,
No tavern-bush to proclaim it.° 60

And this Song of the Vine,
This greeting of mine,
The winds and the birds shall deliver
To the Queen of the West,
In her garlands dressed, 65
On the banks of the Beautiful River.

SANTA FILOMENA°

WHENE'ER a noble deed is wrought,
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,
Our hearts, in glad surprise,
To higher levels rise.

The tidal wave of deeper souls 5
Into our inmost being rolls,
And lifts us unawares
Out of all meaner cares.

Honor to those whose words or deeds
Thus help us in our daily needs, 10
 And by their overflow
 Raise us from what is low !

Thus thought I, as by night I read
Of the great army of the dead,
 The trenches cold and damp, 15
 The starved and frozen camp, —

The wounded from the battle-plain,
In dreary hospitals of pain,
 The cheerless corridors,
 The cold and stony floors. 20

Lo ! in that house of misery
A lady with a lamp I see
 Pass through the glimmering gloom,
 And flit from room to room.

And slow, as in a dream of bliss, 25
The speechless sufferer turns to kiss
 Her shadow, as it falls
 Upon the darkening walls.

As if a door in heaven should be
Opened and then closed suddenly, 30
 The vision came and went,
 The light shone and was spent.

On England's annals, through the long
Hereafter of her speech and song,
 That lights its rays shall cast 35
 From portals of the past.

A Lady with a Lamp shall stand
In the great history of the land,
A noble type of good,
Heroic womanhood.

40

Nor even shall be wanting here
The palm, the lily, and the spear,^o
The symbols that of yore
Saint Filomena bore.

THE DISCOVERER OF THE NORTH CAPE

A LEAF FROM KING ALFRED'S OROSIUS

OTHERE, the old sea-captain,
Who dwelt in Helgoland,^o
To King Alfred, the Lover of Truth,^o
Brought a snow-white walrus-tooth,
Which he held in his brown right hand.

5

His figure was tall and stately,
Like a boy's his eye appeared;
His hair was yellow as hay,
But threads of a silvery gray
Gleamed in his tawny beard.

10

Hearty and hale was Othere,
His cheek had the color of oak;
With a kind of a laugh in his speech,
Like the sea-tide on a beach,
As unto the King he spoke.

15

And Alfred, King of the Saxons,
Had a book upon his knees,
And wrote down the wondrous tale
Of him who was first to sail
Into the Arctic seas.

20

“So far I live to the northward,
No man lives north of me;
To the east are wild mountain-chains,
And beyond them meres and plains;
To the westward all is sea.

25

“So far I live to the northward,
From the harbor of Skeringshale,
If you only sailed by day,
With a fair wind all the way,
More than a month would you sail.

30

“I own six hundred reindeer,
With sheep and swine beside;
I have tribute from the Finns,
Whalebone and reindeer-skins,
And ropes of walrus-hide.

35

“I ploughed the land with horses,
But my heart was ill at ease,
For the old seafaring men
Came to me now and then,
With their sagas of the seas; —

40

“Of Iceland and of Greenland,
And the stormy Hebrides,
And the undiscovered deep; —
Oh I could not eat nor sleep
For thinking of those seas.

45

“To the northward stretched the desert,
How far I fain would know;
So at last I sallied forth,
And three days sailed due north,
As far as the whale-ships go. 50

“To the west of me was the ocean,
To the right the desolate shore,
But I did not slacken sail
For the walrus or the whale,
Till after three days more. 55

“The days grew longer and longer,
Till they became as one,
And southward through the haze^o
I saw the sullen blaze
Of the red midnight sun. 60

“And then uprose before me,
Upon the water’s edge,
The huge and haggard shape
Of that unknown North Cape,
Whose form is like a wedge. 65

“The sea was rough and stormy,
The tempest howled and wailed,
And the sea-fog, like a ghost,
Haunted that dreary coast,
But onward still I sailed. 70

“Four days I steered to eastward,
Four days without a night:
Round in a fiery ring
Went the great sun, O King,
With red and lurid light.” 75

Here Alfred, King of the Saxons,
Ceased writing for a while;
And raised his eyes from his book,
With a strange and puzzled look,
And an incredulous smile.

85

But Othere, the old sea-captain,
He neither paused nor stirred,
Till the King listened, and then
Once more took up his pen,
And wrote down every word.

85

“And now the land,” said Othere,
“Bent southward suddenly,
And I followed the curving shore
And ever southward bore
Into a nameless sea.

90

“And there we hunted the walrus,
The narwhale, and the seal;
Ha! ’twas a noble game!
And like the lightning’s flame
Flew our harpoons of steel.

95

“There were six of us all together
Norsemen of Helgoland;
In two days and no more
We killed of them threescore,
And dragged them to the strand!”

100

Here Alfred the Truth-teller
Suddenly closed his book,
And lifted his blue eyes,
With doubt and strange surmise
Depicted in their look.

105

And Othere the old sea-captain
Stared at him wild and weird,
Then smiled, till his shining teeth
Gleamed white from underneath
His tawny, quivering beard.

110

And to the King of the Saxons,
In witness of the truth,
Raising his noble head,
He stretched his brown hand, and said:
“Behold this walrus-tooth!”

115

DAYBREAK

A WIND came up out of the sea,
And said, “O mists, make room for me.”

It hailed the ships, and cried, “Sail on,
Ye mariners, the night is gone.”

And hurried landward far away,
Crying, “Awake! it is the day.”

5

It said unto the forest, “Shout!
Hang all your leafy banners out!”

It touched the wood-bird’s folded wing,
And said, “O bird, awake and sing.”

10

And o’er the farms, “O chanticleer,
Your clarion blow; the day is near.”

It whispered to the fields of corn,
 "Bow down, and hail the coming morn."

It shouted through the belfry-tower,
 "Awake, O bell ! proclaim the hour."

15

It crossed the churchyard with a sigh,
 And said, "Not yet ! in quiet lie."

THE FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY OF AGASSIZ^o

MAY 28, 1857

It was fifty years ago
 In the pleasant month of May,
 In the beautiful Pays de Vaud,
 A child in its cradle lay.

And Nature, the old nurse, took
 The child upon her knee,
 Saying: "Here is a story-book
 Thy Father has written for thee."

5

"Come, wander with me," she said,
 "Into regions yet untrod ;
 And read what is still unread
 In the manuscripts of God."

10

And he wandered away and away
 With Nature, the dear old nurse,
 Who sang to him night and day
 The rhymes of the universe.

15

And whenever the way seemed long,
Or his heart began to fail,
She would sing a more wonderful song,
Or tell a more marvellous tale.

20

So she keeps him still a child,
And will not let him go,
Though at times his heart beats wild
For the beautiful Pays de Vaud;

Though at times he hears in his dreams
The Ranz des Vaches of old,^o
And the rush of mountain streams
From glaciers clear and cold;

25

And the mother at home says, "Hark:
For his voice I listen and yearn;
It is growing late and dark,
And my boy does not return!"

30

CHILDREN

COME to me, O ye children!
For I hear you at your play,
And the questions that perplexed me
Have vanished quite away.

Ye open the eastern windows,
That look towards the sun,
Where thoughts are singing swallows
And the brooks of morning run.

5

In your hearts are the birds and the sunshine,
In your thoughts the brooklet's flow, 10
But in mine is the wind of Autumn
And the first fall of the snow.

Ah ! what would the world be to us
If the children were no more ?
We should dread the desert behind us 15
Worse than the dark before.

What the leaves are to the forest,
With light and air for food,
Ere their sweet and tender juices
Have been hardened into wood, — 20

That to the world are children ;
Through them it feels the glow
Of a brighter and sunnier climate
Than reaches the trunks below.

Come to me, O ye children ! 25
And whisper in my ear
What the birds and the winds are singing
In your sunny atmosphere.

For what are all our contrivings,
And the wisdom of our books, 30
When compared with your caresses,
And the gladness of your looks ?

Ye are better than all the ballads
That ever were sung or said ;
For ye are living poems, 35
And all the rest are dead.

SANDALPHON°

HAVE you read in the Talmud of old,°
In the Legends the Rabbins have told
Of the limitless realms of the air,
Have you read it, — the marvellous story
Of Sandalphon, the Angel of Glory,
Sandalphon, the Angel of Prayer? 5

How, erect, at the outermost gates
Of the City Celestial he waits,
With his feet on the ladder of light,
That, crowded with angels unnumbered, 10
By Jacob was seen, as he slumbered°
Alone in the desert at night?

The Angels of Wind and of Fire
Chant only one hymn, and expire
With the song's irresistible stress; 15
Expire in their rapture and wonder,
As harp-strings are broken asunder
By music they throb to express.

But serene in the rapturous throng,
Unmoved by the rush of the song, 20
With eyes unimpassioned and slow,
Among the dead angels, the deathless
Sandalphon stands listening breathless
To sounds that ascend from below; —

From the spirits on earth that adore, 25
From the souls that entreat and implore
In the fervor and passion of prayer;

From the hearts that are broken with losses,
And weary with dragging the crosses
Too heavy for mortals to bear.

30

And he gathers the prayers as he stands,
And they change into flowers in his hands,
Into garlands of purple and red;
And beneath the great arch of the portal,
Through the streets of the City Immortal
Is wafted the fragrance they shed.

35

It is but a legend, I know, —
A fable, a phantom, a show,
Of the ancient Rabbinical lore;
Yet the old mediæval tradition,
The beautiful, strange superstition,
But haunts me and holds me the more.

40

When I look from my window at night,
And the welkin above is all white,
All throbbing and panting with stars,
Among them majestic is standing
Sandalphon the angel, expanding
His pinions in nebulous bars.

45

And the legend, I feel, is a part
Of the hunger and thirst of the heart,
The frenzy and fire of the brain,
That grasps at the fruitage forbidden,
The golden pomegranates of Eden,
To quiet its fever and pain.

50

NOTES

THE COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH (Page 1)

THE facts of the settlement of the Colony of New Plymouth are well known. In 1620 the congregation which had left England for Holland started across the Atlantic for the New World. After encountering great hardships, the little band reached Cape Cod in November. After a careful investigation of their surroundings, the Pilgrims resolved to settle. On December 16, old style, or December 26, according to our mode of reckoning time, the *Mayflower* anchored in Plymouth Harbor.

Every young student of American history and literature should read the simple and graphic account of the founding of the new nation, as it is recorded in *Chronicles of The Pilgrim Fathers of the Colony of Plymouth*, written by Bradford and Winslow, and edited by Dr. Alexander Young.

Miles Standish appears in the chronicles for the first time, November 13, 1620. He was not a member of the Robinson congregation that left England for Holland, but joined it in the Low Countries, where he was serving with the English troops sent over to aid the Dutch against the Spanish. He was a gentleman, born in Lancashire, heir apparent to a large estate. A descendant of warlike stock, he kept the honor of his ancestors at least in that particular. His warlike nature spread terror through the Indian tribes. In 1625 he was sent to England as agent of the colony, returned in 1626, removed to Duxbury in 1630, and died in 1656.

It is interesting to trace in the entries in Longfellow's diary the progress of the writing of *The Courtship of Miles Standish*.

December 2, 1857. "Soft as spring. I begin a new poem, *Priscilla*; to be a kind of Puritan pastoral; the subject, the courtship of Miles Standish. This, I think, will be a better treatment of the subject than the dramatic one I wrote some time ago."

December 3d, 1857. "My poem is in hexameters, an idyl of the Old Colony times."

December 29th, 1857. "Wrote a little at *Priscilla*."

January 29th, 1858. "Began again on *Priscilla*, and wrote several pages, finishing the second canto."

February 17, 1858. "Have worked pretty steadily for the last week on *Priscilla*. To-day finish canto four."

March 1, 1858. "Keep indoors, and work on *Priscilla*, which I think I shall call *The Courtship of Miles Standish*."

March 16, 1858. "But I find time, notwithstanding, to write a whole canto of *Miles Standish*, namely, canto eight."

March 22d. "The poem is finished, and now only needs revision, which I begin to-day. But in the main, I have it as I want it."

April 23d. "Printing *Miles Standish*, and seeing all its defects as it stands before me in type."

The book did not appear till October. On the 16th of that month the following entry was made: "*The Courtship of Miles Standish* published. At noon Ticknor told me he had sold five thousand in Boston, besides the orders from a distance. He had printed ten thousand, and has another ten thousand in press." On the 23d he wrote, "Between these two Saturdays *Miles Standish* has marched steadily on. Another five thousand are in press; in all an army of twenty-five thousand, — in one week. Fields tells me that in London ten thousand were sold the first day."

2. The chronicles give us a vivid account of the first building: "Tuesday, the 9th of January, was a reasonable fair day; and we

went to labor that day in the building of our town, in two rows of houses for more safety. We divided by lot the plot of ground whereon to build our town, after the proportion formerly allotted. We agreed that every man should build his own house, thinking by that course men should make more haste than working in common. The common house, in which for the first we made our rendezvous, being near finished, wanted only covering, it being about twenty foot square. Some should make mortar, and some gather thatch ; so that in four days half of it was thatched."

3. **Doublet**, a close-fitting garment for men, covering the body from the neck to the waist.

Cordova in Spain became famous for the preparation of goat-skin which took the name Cordovan. Hence the word "**cordwain**" and "**cordwainer**," the term applied to shoemaker.

8. **Corselet**, a light breastplate of armor.

Sword of Damascus, a sword made at Damascus. Damascus steel was famous everywhere for its hardness and its beauty, ornamented with fine wavy lines. The secret of the workmanship has never been revealed to the Western world.

10. **Fowling-piece**, a light gun adapted for killing birds.

Matchlock, a musket fired by means of a match. Most of the muskets of the Pilgrims were of this kind.

15. The chronicles say that John Alden, who was a member of the *Mayflower* company, "was hired for a cooper at Southampton, where the ship victualled ; and being a hopeful young man, was much desired, but left to his own liking to go or stay when he came here [Plymouth], but he stayed and married here."

19. Saint Gregory I, named "**The Great**," was Pope, 590-604. The story runs that, when he was monk, he saw some Anglo-Saxon youths exposed for sale in the slave-markets of Rome, and upon learning their nationality he exclaimed, "*non angli sed angeli*" [not angles but angels]. Years afterward he remembered the captives and sent St. Augustine as a missionary to Britain.

25. Reference to the service of Standish in Flanders.

28. *Arcabucero*, originally Spanish word for archer, then musketeer.

34. Miles Standish was appointed captain at a meeting held Saturday morning, February 17, 1621.

46. *Howitzer*, a short, light cannon with a large bore. These lines show truly the precaution which the colonists took against sudden attacks by the Indians.

52. *Sagamore*, Indian chief of the second rank ; *sachem*, of the first rank ; *pow-wow*, a conjurer or medicine-man.

53. These names of Indians are all to be found in the chronicles.

61. "Jan. 29, dies Rose, the wife of Captain Standish. N.B. This month eight of our number die."

70. "Militarie Discipline : or the Young Artillery Man, Wherein is Discoursed and Shown the Postures both of Musket and Pike, the Exactest Way, &c., &c., * * * * * By Colonel William Bar-riffe."

71. *Goldinge* was a translator whose translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was highly regarded in the Elizabethan Age.

83. The *Mayflower* started on her return voyage April 5, 1621. "We despatch the ship with Captain Jones, who this day sails from New Plymouth and May 6, arrives in England."

85. Among those who came over in the *Mayflower* were "Mr. William Mullines and his wife and 2 children, Joseph and Priscila ; and a servant, Robart Carter."

99. *Caius Julius Cæsar*. For an account of his life see Plutarch's *Lives* translated by A. H. Clough. "In his journey, as he was crossing the Alps, and passing by a small village of the barbarians with but few inhabitants, and those wretchedly poor, his companions asked the question among themselves by way of mockery, if there were any canvassing for offices there ; any contention which should be uppermost, or feuds of great men one against another. To which Cæsar made answer seriously, 'For my part, I

had rather be the first man among these fellows, than the second man in Rome.' ”

133. “And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone ; I will make him an help meet for him.”

— *Genesis* ii. 18.

139. **She is alone.** Bradford writes, “Mr. William Mollines and his wife, his sone and his servant dyed the first winter. Only his daughter Priscilla survived and married with John Alden, who are both living and have 11 children.”

206. **Astaroth**, the chief female divinity of the Phœnicians and Baal, the principal male god ; usually the former is the moon-goddess, the latter the sun-god.

210. **Mayflowers**, in England the hawthorn, in New England the trailing arbutus.

212. Reference to the old story of Babes lost in the Woods and covered with leaves by the robin.

224. The One Hundredth Psalm, according to the Ainsworth translation, begins thus : —

Bow to Jehovah all the earth.

Serve ye Jehovah with gladness ;

before him come with singing mirth.

Know that Jehovah he God is. It's he that

made us and not we, his flock and sheep of his feeding.

These three verses will sufficiently show how harsh was the translation so generally used by the Pilgrims.

225. **Martin Luther** (1483–1546), the great German reformer, translator of the Bible, and founder of the present literary language of Germany. His translation of the Bible occupies about the same position in German as the King James version of the Bible in English.

231. **Henry Ainsworth** (1571–1622) was a separatist clergyman and distinguished scholar, who, driven from England by the religious persecutions, settled in Amsterdam and preached and taught.

245. "And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

— *Luke ix. 62.*

269. A real English picture.

321. "There are at this time in England two ancient families of the name, one of Standish Hall and the other of Duxbury Park, both in Lancashire, who trace their descent from a common ancestor, Ralph de Standish, living in 1221."

324. Terms of heraldry.

343. A reference to the *Book of Revelation*, chapters xxi and xxii.

350. A sea-weed of a reddish brown color which is sometimes eaten.

362. *II Samuel ii. 3.*

392. Edward Winslow, in his Letter at the end of his *Relation*, says, "We have built seven dwelling-houses, and four for the use of the plantation." In Hazard's *State Papers*, I, p. 100, is found the following plan of the seven houses: —

The North Side.

The South Side.

Peter Brown.

John Goodman.

Mr. Brewster [Elder Brewster].

Highway → [Town Brook].

The Street.

John Billington.

Mr. Isaac Allerton.

Francis Cooke.

Edward Winslow.

415. **Wat Tyler** (Walter the Tyler) headed a revolt of peasants of England in 1381. He is said to have led, with Jack Straw, a body of men of Kentshire and Essexshire to London. He was killed at Smithfield by Lord Mayor Walworth.

442. **William Brewster** was chosen Elder while the congregation of John Robinson was in Leyden. Governor Bradford, in his *Memoir of Elder Brewster*, has left us a valuable account of the private and official character of this first American minister.

448. This was probably the Geneva Bible, the translation made in 1560 by a group of eminent scholars who settled at Geneva, Switzerland. Of these translators the chief were John Knox and Miles Coverdale, who were exiled from England, and John Calvin, the Geneva scholar.

450. A common form of challenge in colonial times. See Abiel Holmes, *Annals of America*, I, 177. In Winslow's *Relation* (edited by Dr. Young) occurs the following account, p. 281 :—

“At length came one of them to us, who was sent by Conanacus, their chief sachem or king, accompanied with one Tokamahamon, a friendly Indian. This messenger inquired for Tisquantum, our interpreter, who not being at home, seemed rather to be glad than sorry, and leaving for him a bundle of new arrows, lapped in a rattlesnake's skin, desired to depart with all expedition.” . . . “Hereupon, after some deliberation, the Governor stuffed the skin with powder and shot, and sent it back, returning no less defiance to Conanacus.”

486. “All things being now in readiness, the forenamed Captain, with ten men and accompanied with Tisquantum and Hobamock, set forwards for the Masschusets. But we had no sooner turned the point of the harbour, called the Gurnet's Nose, but there came an Indian of Tisquantum's family running to certain of our people that were from home with all eagerness, having his face wounded, and the blood still fresh on the same, calling to them to

return home"—with the fear that the Indians were about to assault the town in the Captain's absence.

547. Stephen Hopkins, Richard Warren, Gilbert Winslow. "Stephen Hopkins, whose name stands the fourteenth in order among the signers of the Compact, with the honorable prefix of Mr., seems to have been a person of some consideration among the Pilgrims." Richard Warren stands twelfth in the list, and Gilbert Winslow thirty-first.

551. Mr. Jones was master, or captain, of the *Mayflower*.

558. Gunwale, the upper edge of the boat's side.

560. Thwarts are the seats which reach from one side to the other.

599. And this, despite the very hard winter which they had experienced and the unfavorable prospects before them.

606. The scene of the first conflict between the Pilgrims and the Indians.

664. "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden. . . . The name of the first is Pison. . . . And the name of the second river is Gihon. . . . And the name of the third river is Hiddekel. . . . And the fourth river is Euphrates."—*Genesis* ii. 10 ff.

745. In Winslow's *Relation* the chapter entitled, "Standish's expedition against the Indians of Wessagusset [Weymouth], and the breaking up of Weston's colony at that place," gives an account of this expedition. The poet has taken the liberty to change the time of his source, since, according to history, the *Mayflower* returned in April, 1621, and the expedition occurred in March, 1623.

755. *I Samuel* xvii. 4; *Numbers* xxi. 33.

756-820. "Many times after, divers of them severally, or few together, came to the plantation to him [Captain Standish], where they would whet and sharpen the points of their knives before his face, and use many other insulting gestures and speeches. Among the rest Wituwamat bragged of the excellency of his knife. On

the end of the handle there was pictured a woman's face ; ' But, said he, ' I have another at home, wherewith I have killed both French and English, and that hath a man's face on it ; and by and by these two must marry.' Further he said of that knife he there had, ' Hinnaim namen, hinnaim michen, matta cuts' ; that is to say, ' By and by it should see, and by and by it should eat, but not speak.' Also Pecksuot, being a man of greater stature than the Captain, told him, though he were a great captain, yet he was but a little man ; ' And,' said he, ' though I be no sachem, yet I am a man of great strength and courage.' These things the Captain observed, yet bare with patience for the present.

" On the next day, seeing he could not get many of them together at once, and this Pecksuot and Wituwamat both together, with another man, and a youth of some eighteen years of age, which was brother to Wituwamat and, villain-like, trod in his steps, daily putting many tricks upon the weaker sort of men, and having about as many of his own company in a room with them, gave the word to his men, and the door being fast shut, began with Pecksuot, and snatching his own knife from his neck, though with much struggling, killed him therewith, the point whereof he had made as sharp as a needle, and ground the back also to an edge. Wituwamat and the other man the rest killed, and took the youth, whom the Captain caused to be hanged. But it is incredible how many wounds these two pineses [braves] received before they died, not making any fearful noise, but catching at their weapons and striving to the last. Hobbamock stood by all this time as a spectator, and meddled not, observing how our men demeaned themselves in this action. All being here ended, smiling he brake forth into these speeches to the captain : ' Yesterday Pecksuot, bragging of his own strength and stature, said, though you were a great captain, yet you were but a little man ; but to-day I see you are big enough to lay him on the ground.' "

825. " In the latter end of July and the beginning of August

came two ships with supply unto us." These ships were the *Anne* and the *Little James*.

829. Merestead, a bounded lot.

840. Edward Winslow wrote back to England a letter, on the 11th of December, 1621, "setting forth a brief and true declaration of the worth of that plantation; also certain useful directions for such as intend a voyage into those parts." This letter is one of the most interesting documents of early New England in the instructions which it gives for the furnishing of the new habitations.

846. The Alden homestead at Duxbury, Massachusetts.

858. *Proverbs* xxxi. 10.

872. A very famous German legend.

921. **Trysting-place**, a place designated for the assembling of soldiers or the meeting of parties for an interview.

927. *Exodus* xxviii.

936. *Book of Ruth*, chapter iv.

973. An old English proverb.

1013. "The place was called the brook of Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence." — *Numbers* xiii. 24.

1015. See the beautiful account of the coming of Rebecca, the meeting and marriage with Isaac, *Genesis* xxiv.

PRELUDE (Page 63)

43. **Pentecost**, a Jewish festival celebrated on the fifteenth day after the second day of the Passover. In the Catholic church, it commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles, called also Whitsunday.

46. **Bishop's-caps**, called also miterwort, a plant so named because the pod looks like the cap or mitre of a bishop.

83. In the fall of 1839, Longfellow published his first volume of original poems, *The Voices of the Night*. To these he added

five which he selected from his contribution to various magazines and papers, and prefixed *The Prelude*. It will be observed that the poet speaks of the change of thought and feeling between the early and the late poems.

HYMN TO THE NIGHT (Page 67)

21. **Orestes**, a character in Greek legend, the son of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. He slew his mother, Clytemnestra, and was pursued by the Furies. The Greek tragic poets, especially Euripides, were fond of this legend for their dramas.

A PSALM OF LIFE (Page 68)

This poem was published in *Knickerbocker Magazine*, October, 1838, and has always been one of the most widely read of Longfellow's poems. It is especially characteristic of the young poet, who was much given to moralizing. These lines have been a source of real inspiration to men and women all over the world. They announced a high ideal and struck a new note of genuine courage.

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS (Page 69)

This poem was written in 1838, and published in 1839 in *Knickerbocker Magazine* with the second title, *A Psalm of Death*.

THE LIGHT OF STARS (Page 71)

This poem was published in *Knickerbocker Magazine*, January, 1839, where it was entitled, *A Second Psalm of Life*.

8. **Mars**, a Latin deity, worshipped as god of war; also the name of the planet next outside the earth in the solar system, strikingly red in color. "Mars is generally represented as of a youthful but powerful figure, armed with a helmet, shield, and spear; he is sometimes represented as bearded and heavily armed."

FOOTSTEPS OF ANGELS (Page 72)

This poem was finished March 26, 1839, having been begun almost a year before. Longfellow sometimes called this poem a third *Psalm of Life*.

13. The beloved friend and brother-in-law of the poet, George W. Pierce, of whose death Longfellow heard while abroad, Christmas Eve, 1835.

21. His wife, Mary Longfellow, who died November 29, 1835, at Rotterdam. An account of the death of Mrs. Longfellow may be read in the poet's own words, in T. W. Higginson's *Longfellow*, American Men of Letters Series. See also the poem *Resignation* (page 153).

FLOWERS (Page 74)

6. **Astrologers**, observers of the stars who profess to determine the influence of stars on persons and events. **Eld**, an obsolete form of *old*.

36. **Ruth**, the beautiful pastoral story of Ruth gleaning in the fields of Boaz, to be found in the Bible.

THE BELEAGUERED CITY (Page 76)

5. **Moldau**, the chief river in Bohemia. It flows past Prague and then joins the Elbe.

MIDNIGHT MASS FOR THE DYING YEAR (Page 78)

This poem was written September 17, 1839, and called *The Autumnal Chant*. It was published in *Knickerbocker Magazine* as *The Fifth Psalm*.

24. Reference to the tragic character in Shakespeare's drama, *King Lear*, who was cast out-of-doors by his two ungrateful daughters and became mad.

48. Labrador is the peninsula between the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the Atlantic Ocean, Hudson Bay, and Hudson Strait.

49. After the publication of the poem, the critics raised a question over the word "Euroclydon." To this criticism, the poet replied: "They are raising a slight breeze against the word Euroclydon. But I am right, notwithstanding. It means a storm-wind, or a north-easter, coming over the seas; and is no more confined to the Mediterranean than rude Boreas. Look into Robinson's *Lexicon* and you will find the whole explained."

60. Kyrie, eleyson!

Christe, eleyson!

Greek words meaning, "Lord have mercy upon us. Christ have mercy upon us," used in the mass and the litany of the saints.

HYMN OF THE MORAVIAN NUNS OF BETHLEHEM (Page 81)

The Moravians are a Christian denomination that traces its origin to John Huss, the Bohemian reformer. They have a large and prosperous settlement at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

It is said that while Lafayette lay sick at Bethlehem, Pulaski visited him and ordered the flag of crimson silk which formed the standard of his legion. Count Pulaski entered the American service in 1777; served at Brandywine, and formed the corps called "Pulaski's Legion" in 1778; was mortally wounded at Savannah in 1779.

7. Later editions read "crimson" in this line instead of "blood-red."

SUNRISE ON THE HILLS (Page 83)

18. The bittern is a kind of heron that makes a noise frequently called booming.

30. Dingle, a small dell or secluded valley.

31. This poem is one of Longfellow's first and shows particularly in the last stanza the influence which Bryant had upon the young poet.

THE SPIRIT OF POETRY (Page 84)

10. **Cowled and dusky-sandaled**, wearing a hood and sandals. Sandals are soles strapped to the bottom of the feet for shoes.

11. "**weeds**," the poetical word for clothing.

44. This line was afterward changed to "Within her tender eye." This poem was one of the first which Longfellow wrote after he left college.

BURIAL OF THE MINNISINK (Page 86)

18. The funeral of an Indian chief or any barbarian leader is always accompanied by great ceremony. Much of the superstition of the people is centred in the funeral rites. It was customary to place in or near the grave the dead warrior's weapons and sometimes his dog or battle-steed.

25. **Roebuck**, a kind of small deer, which is usually found in a mountainous country.

29. **Cuirass**, literally, a breastplate of leather; now the word for a piece of defensive armor reaching from the neck to the girdle.

THE SKELETON IN ARMOR (Page 88)

Published in *Knickerbocker Magazine*, 1841. A skeleton in armor had been dug up near Fall River, Massachusetts, and was believed by many to be the remains of a Norseman. A full description of the skeleton may be read in *The American Monthly Magazine*, January, 1836. Some archæological students began to connect the skeleton with the old tower at Newport, Rhode Island, which some have supposed to have been erected by the early Norsemen; at present, however, the best authorities regard the skeleton as that of an Indian.

5. Reference to the art of embalming practised chiefly by the Egyptians.

17. **Viking** (Old Norse *Vikingr*), pirate or freebooter.

19. **Skald** or scald, the name given to the ancient Scandinavian poets or singers.

20. **Saga**, Scandinavian name for legend or myth.

28. **Gerfalcon** or gyrfalcon, so called because of its circling flight. Latin *gyrus* means "circle."

38. **Were-wolf**, literally, man-wolf, a person transformed into a wolf by some supernatural influence or voluntarily. Formerly belief in were-wolves was very common.

49. **Wassail** is derived from the Anglo-Saxon words *wes hal*, be in health, an expression of good wishes, especially in drinking. Then it came to be the term for the drink. **Bout** means a contest or a turn, hence wassail-bout or drinking-bout.

53. **Berserk** or Berserker, in Scandinavian mythology, a hero "who fought frenzied by intoxicating liquors and naked, regardless of wounds."

77. **Hildebrand**, a celebrated legendary character of German romance, whose story is told in *Hildebrandslied* and who also appears in the famous Middle High German poem called *Nibelungenlied*.

110. The cape at the northeastern corner of Jutland, Denmark.

122. **Cormorant**, literally "sea-raven," a voracious eater of fish; hence an emblem of gluttony.

159. The Scandinavian salutation when drinking a health.

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS (Page 93)

Longfellow's Journal for December 30, 1839, reads as follows:—

"I wrote last evening a notice of Allston's poems. After which I sat till twelve o'clock by my fire, smoking, when suddenly it came into my mind to write the *Ballad of the Schooner Hesperus*;

which I accordingly did. Then I went to bed, but could not sleep. New thoughts were running in my mind, and I got up to add them to the ballad. It was three by the clock. I then went to bed and fell asleep. I feel pleased with the ballad. It hardly cost me an effort. It did not come into my mind by lines, but by stanzas."

A few days later, Park Benjamin, editor of the *New World*, writes, "Your ballad, *The Wreck of the Hesperus*, is grand. Enclosed are twenty-five dollars, the sum you mentioned for it, paid by the proprietors of the *New World*, in which glorious paper it will resplendently coruscate on Saturday next. Of all American journals the *New World* is alone worthy to contain it!"

14. The Spanish Main was a popular name for the northern coast of South America from the mouth of the Orinoco to the west, frequently confused with the Caribbean Sea.

60. Norman's Woe, off the coast of Gloucester, Massachusetts.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH (Page 97)

Longfellow wrote this very popular poem October 5, 1839, and called it *A New Psalm of Life*. The suggestion came from the blacksmith's shop which the poet passed daily and which stood under a large horse-chestnut tree near his house. The tree was cut down in 1876. From a piece of its wood was made a chair, which was presented to the poet, by the school children of Cambridge, on his seventy-second birthday, in 1879. The poem has always been popular, and may truly be called a real American idyl.

GOD'S-ACRE (Page 99)

Longfellow afterward added a stanza which he considered an improvement, by leaving the mind not on the furrow, but on the "waving harvest beyond."

TO THE RIVER CHARLES (Page 100)

The Charles River separates Boston from Cambridge and flows in front of Craigie House, the old Revolutionary mansion that afterward became the home of Longfellow.

30. Three friends whose names were Charles: Charles Sumner, Charles Folsom, Charles Amory.

THE GOBLET OF LIFE (Page 101)

8. **Hippocrene**, a fountain on Mt. Helicon in Greece, sacred to the Muses.

10. **Mistletoe**, a plant found on different kinds of trees, especially apple, oak, and maple. It was very early consecrated to religious purposes by the Celts and, particularly, by the Druids. Many superstitions still prevail about its charms. Note the powers attributed to the fennel in the following stanzas.

41. **Ajax**, one of the Greek heroes in the Trojan War, well known for his size and beauty. According to poetical tradition, he became mad and attacked and slew the sheep of the Greeks, imagining them to be his enemies.

MAIDENHOOD (Page 104)

Longfellow liked this poem especially, and thought this and *Excelsior* the best he had written.

18. **Elysium**, or the Elysian Fields, were the fabled abode of the souls of the good and heroes exempt from death; in classical mythology, always described as a place of exceeding bliss.

21. Because the falcon was commonly trained to pursue and entrap other birds.

EXCELSIOR (Page 106)

This poem was written September 28, 1841. "One day Mr. Longfellow's eye fell upon a scrap of newspaper, a part of the

heading of one of the New York journals, bearing the seal of the State of New York, — a shield, with a rising sun and the motto, in heraldic Latin, ‘Excelsior.’ At once there sprang up in his imagination the picture of the youth scaling the Alpine pass. . . . This the poet made a symbol of the aspiration and sacrifice of a nobly ideal soul, whose words and aim are ‘an unknown tongue’ to the multitude; and who, refusing to listen to the cautions of experience or prudence, or to the pleadings of home affections, of woman’s love, or of formal religion, presses on to a higher goal. This goal he does not perfectly attain in this life, but in dying still presses on to a higher beyond.” — Samuel Longfellow’s *Life of the Poet*, Vol. I, p. 384 note.

32. **Saint Bernard** was a celebrated French monk of the eleventh century and a famous preacher of the second Crusade. Then the name for a monastery high in the Alps, maintained for the relief of travellers. The Saint Bernard dogs helped to find those who were lost in the snow.

THE SERENADE (Page 107)

This little song is taken from *The Spanish Student*, a comedy which was published in book form in 1843, and was intended for stage presentation.

CARILLON (Page 108)

“In the evening, heard the Bell-Ringers, a human *carillon*! They seemed to toss the sounds from one bell and catch them in another; and, half closing one’s eyes and giving reins to fancy, it was easy to imagine all the steeples in Belgium met together and tossing the notes from their bells.” — *Longfellow’s Journal*, October 29, 1849.

Carillon is the French word for a chime of bells.

1. **Bruges** is the capital of the province of West Flanders, Belgium, at one time the commercial centre of Europe. It was an

important town as early as the seventh century. To-day it is of interest to the tourist on account of its cathedral with fine paintings and glass.

38. **Roundelays**, songs in which lines or phrases are continually repeated.

39. **Conceits**, witty thoughts or turns of expression.

Ditties, little poems or songs.

THE BELFRY OF BRUGES (Page 111)

Published January, 1843, in *Graham's Magazine*. See *The Carillon* and note (page 108).

19. The early governors of Flanders, appointed by the King of France, were called Foresters.

22. **The Order of the Golden Fleece** was founded by Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, at Bruges in 1430. The badge of the order is a golden ram.

25. **Maximilian** was son of the Emperor Frederick the Third. **Marie de Valois**, duchess of Burgundy, was famous for her gentleness and virtue.

29. Reference to Flemish heroes and historical events.

32. **The Golden Dragon** was taken from the church of St. Sophia, at Constantinople, and placed on the belfry of Bruges, then transported to Ghent.

36. The inscription on the bell reads: "Mynen naem is Roland; als ik klep is er brand, and als ik luy is er victorie in het land" (My name is Roland; when I toll there is fire, and when I ring there is victory in the land).

A GLEAM OF SUNSHINE (Page 114)

In his *Journal* for August 31, 1846, Longfellow writes, "In the afternoon a delicious drive with F and C through Brookline, by the church and the 'green lane,' and homeward through a lovelier lane,

with barberries and wild vines clustering over the old stone walls." This became the scene of the poem, "A Gleam of Sunshine." "F" was Cornelius Conway Felton, a distinguished classical scholar and intimate friend of Longfellow. He afterward became president of Harvard University. "C" was the poet's son Charles, born June 9, 1844.

32. "And he dreamed and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." — *Genesis* xxviii. 12.

THE ARSENAL AT SPRINGFIELD (Page 116)

In July, 1843, Longfellow was married to Francis Elizabeth Appleton. On their wedding journey through the Berkshire Hills they visited the Arsenal at Springfield. Charles Sumner was with them at Springfield and remarked that the money expended upon the weapons of war would have been better spent upon a library. Mrs. Longfellow suggested "how like an organ looked the ranged and shining gun-barrels which covered the walls from floor to ceiling and what mournful music Death would bring from them." The poem was composed a few months later.

7. **Miserere.** That part of the Roman Catholic liturgy which is used for the sick and burial service. So called because the fifty-first Psalm, commonly used in this service, begins, "Miserere mei, Domine" (Have mercy upon me, O Lord!).

14. **Cimbric**, an ancient Celtic people of Central Europe.

16. **Tartar**, more properly Tatar, the present form of the word perhaps due to confusion with Tartarus, the word for the Greek abyss or hades. Tartars are tribes of peoples of Turkish and Mongolian origin, inhabiting Eastern Europe and Western Asia.

A graphic account of the flight of one of the great Tartar tribes may be read in De Quincey's *Revolt of the Tartars*.

19. **Aztec**, the band of Indians who occupied the valley of New

Mexico. Their power was reduced by the invasion of Cortez in 1519. See Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico*.

Teocalli, plural *teocallis*, literally, God's house; a temple, usually of pyramidal shape, built by the early inhabitants of Mexico.

28. Diapason, literally a concord through all the tones; the entire compass of voice or instrument.

40. Genesis iv. 15.

Because he killed his brother Abel, Cain became a fugitive and a vagabond, and according to the tradition of the Middle Ages was the first parent of all criminals and evil-doers.

RAIN IN SUMMER (Page 118)

63. Aquarius, literally water-bearer, one of the signs of the Zodiac, representing a man standing with his left hand extended upward, and with his right hand pouring out of a vase a stream of water which flows into the mouth of the Southern fish.

81. The rainbow.

THE BRIDGE (Page 121)

Longfellow finished "The Bridge Over the Charles," as he first called the poem, on October 9, 1845, and "retouched" it on the 17th. The Charles River separates Cambridge from Boston.

THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS (Page 125)

Written November 12, 1845.

2. The Gold House in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, was the home-
stead of Mrs. Longfellow's maternal grandfather. Longfellow and
Mrs. Longfellow visited this house at the same time that they saw
the Arsenal at Springfield, on their wedding journey in the summer
of 1843.

69. Horologe, literally, clock, a timepiece of any kind.

THE ARROW AND THE SONG (Page 127)

“Before church wrote *The Arrow and the Song*, which came into my mind as I stood with my back to the fire, and glanced on to the paper with arrowy speed. Literally an improvisation.”

—*Journal*, November 16, 1845.

AUTUMN (Page 128)

3. **Samarcand**, a city of Turkestan, Asia, long famous for the manufacture of cotton and silk.

5. **Charlemagne**, the great king of the Franks and emperor of the Romans, crowned at St. Peter's, Rome, on Christmas day, 800. His reign was distinguished by conquest and by his favor toward scholars and the fine arts.

9. **Harvest moon**, the full moon nearest the autumn equinox, the 21st of September.

DANTE (Page 128)

Dante (originally Durante) Alighieri was born at Florence in 1265 and died at Ravenna, Italy, in 1321. He became the “first Italian” and is often called “the great Tuscan,” since Tuscany is the province which has Florence for its chief city. Dante was driven from his beloved city in 1302 and spent the rest of his life in aimless wandering over the face of the earth. In the course of his wandering he wrote one of the great books of the world, *The Divine Comedy*.

4. **Farinata degli Uberti** was a leader of the Ghibelline faction in Florence in the thirteenth century, in the great conflict between the party of the king and the party of the pope. Dante speaks of Farinata as the saviour of his country.

CURFEW (Page 129)

3. **Curfew**, literally "cover fire." A bell was rung at an early hour in the evening as a signal to the inhabitants of the town to put out the lights and fires. The practice probably existed in England in the early part of the eleventh century, having been established to prevent fires and troubles in the streets.

THE BUILDING OF THE SHIP (Page 130)

The poet's *Journal* tells the story of the writing of the poem, June 18, 1849. "Sat and wrote *The Building of the Ship*. September 20, 1849, *The Building of the Ship* goes on. It will be rather long. Will it be good?" September 22, 1849, "Finished this morning *The Building of the Ship*."

29. **The great Harry**. The first British war ship, built in 1488 for Henry VII.

Crank, unsteady, in danger of careening and upsetting. See notes on "Phantom Ship," p. 170.

37. **I wis** is an adverb meaning certainly, but is sometimes wrongly treated as if it were a pronoun and verb, as here, for "I know."

61. **Pascagoula**, a river in Mississippi.

62. **Roanoke**, a river in Virginia and North Carolina.

69. **Wooden wall**, ship.

73. **Argosy**, a merchant vessel of the largest size. See *Merchant of Venice*.

95. **Slip**, the plane upon which the ship is built and from which it is launched.

127. "Excelleth" in later editions.

137. **Scarfed**, joined as if in one piece.

160. **Madagascar**, an island in the Indian Ocean east of Africa.

161. **Lascar**, a native sailor or menial about the camps.

178. **Stemson**, the pieces of timber which are bolted to the stem ; **keelson**, the pieces that bind the floor timbers to the keel ; **sternson-knee**, the end of the keelson to which the sternpost is bolted. All terms in ship-building.

214. **Naiads**, water-nymphs who were supposed to preside over streams and fountains.

219. **Sark**, an old word for shirt.

337. **Fortunate Isles**, or the **Blessed Isles**, supposed to lie in the Western Ocean (Atlantic), where the gods abode in eternal joy.

347. **Shores and spurs**, props.

SEAWEED (Page 143)

3. **Equinox**, the moment when the sun crosses the plane of the earth's equator, thus making the day and night everywhere of equal length.

14. **Skerry**, a rocky isle or reef.

SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT (Page 147)

Humphrey Gilbert was a well-known English navigator, step-brother of Walter Raleigh. He set out on many expeditions, on one of which (1583) he sighted Newfoundland and established the first English colony in North America. His ship foundered on its return to England. Sir Humphrey perished and is said to have uttered as his last words the sentence, "We are as near to heaven by sea as by land."

2. **Corsair**, a freebooter or privateer, a captain or ship that scours the coast or sea for gain.

13. **Campobello**, a town in Sicily.

36. **Ground-swell**, a broad, deep swell or rolling of the sea, caused by a distant storm or gale.

39. **The Spanish Main** is a term rather vaguely applied to the north coast of South America. Late editions of the poem read, —

"With mist and rain, o'er the open main."

THE LIGHTHOUSE (Page 149)

Written November 7, 1849.

4. "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way ; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light ; to go by day and night." — *Exodus* xiii. 21.

17. **Christopher**, literally, Christ-bearer. A martyr of the third century, who was reputed as having great size and strength. As a penance for having served the devil, he devoted himself to the task of carrying pilgrims across a stream where there was no bridge. Christ came to the river one day in the form of a child and asked to be carried over ; but his weight grew heavier and heavier, till his bearer was nearly broken down in the middle of the stream.

49. For deceit practised upon him by Prometheus, Jove denied to man the use of fire ; but Prometheus stole it from heaven and brought it to earth in a hollow reed. For this offence, he was chained to Mt. Caucasus, where daily his liver was consumed by an eagle.

RESIGNATION (Page 153)

7. "Thus saith the Lord ; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping ; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not."

— *Jeremiah* xxxi. 15.

9. "Although affliction cometh not forth out of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground." — *Job* v. 6.

21. **Mary Storer Potter**, a friend and schoolmate of the poet, was married to him September 14, 1831, she being then nineteen years of age. She died in 1835 at Rotterdam, while they were abroad for study. See the poem *Footsteps of Angels* and note (page 72).

THE BUILDERS (Page 155)

Finished May 9, 1846.

BIRDS OF PASSAGE (Page 157)

Written November 1, 1845. This subject was afterward used to embrace several poems which appeared in various magazines.

GASPAR BECERRA (Page 158)

The poem was written September 30, 1849. Becerra was a Spanish painter.

This poem is characteristic of the simple manner in which Longfellow could apply the life or work of any person whom he chose as a subject of his work.

PEGASUS IN POUND (Page 159)

"Work in college all day. . . . In the evening, Faculty-meeting. After which I sat by the fire in my deep chair and wrote the greater part of *Pegasus in Pound*,—a poem to the collection to be entitled *The Estray*." — *Journal*, November 9, 1846.

Pegasus, the winged horse of the Muses, sprang from the blood of Medusa, when she was slain by Perseus. With a stroke of his hoof he was fabled to have caused to well forth on Mt. Helicon, the poetically inspiring fountain of Hippocrene.

40. **Alectryon**, Greek word for cock; the poetical name for the domestic cock.

THE SINGERS (Page 162)

November 6, 1849. Longfellow said that he wrote this poem "to show the excellence of different kinds of song." Here the three singers charm, strengthen, and teach.

PROMETHEUS (Page 163)

“Writing a poem, which I hope will turn out a good one, — *Prometheus and Epimetheus*, — the before and after; the feeling of the first design and execution compared with that with which one looks back upon the work when done.” — *Journal*, May 16, 1854.

Again January 25, 1855, he says: “*Putnam’s Magazine* for February comes, with ‘Prometheus and Epimetheus,’ in which I try to portray the ardor of poetic composition, and the feeling of disappointment and dissatisfaction with which we look upon our work when the glow has passed away.”

1. **Prometheus** stole fire from heaven and was chained by Jove to Mt. Caucasus, where an eagle devoured his liver. See the poem “The Lighthouse” (page 149).

2. **Olympus**, a prominent mountain in Greece, which came to be regarded as the abode of the gods.

31. **Dante**, see the sonnet on “Dante” and note (page 128).

33. **Milton** (1608–1674), one of England’s greatest poets, whose most distinguished work was the epic “Paradise Lost.”

Cervantes, the author of the Spanish romance, *Don Quixote* (1605), perhaps the greatest Spanish writer.

34. **Corybantes**, “the priests of the Goddess Rhea in Phrygia, whose worship they celebrated by orgiastic dances.”

EPIMETHEUS (Page 165)

Epimetheus was the brother of Prometheus and the husband of Pandora.

3. **Hymeneal**, relating to marriage. **Hymen** was the son of Bacchus and Aphrodite or Venus, and was the god of marriage.

9. The **dithyramb** was at first a choral song in honor of the Greek god, Dionysus, then of other gods and heroes; finally it became the name of a form of Greek lyrical composition.

35. In Greek legend, **Icarus** was the son of Dædalus, and was drowned in the sea because in his flight he came too near the sun and his wings melted.

36. In Greek mythology, **Pandora** was the first woman created by Zeus. She became the wife of Epimetheus, and brought down all the evils upon mankind. "Pandora's box" contained all the blessings of life. She opened it and allowed all to escape except hope.

37. **Jove** or Jupiter, the supreme deity in Roman myth, corresponding to Zeus in Greek mythology.

38. **Thetis**, the chief of the Nereids, the beautiful maidens of Neptune, god of the sea.

Flora, the goddess of flowers and the spring.

39. **Aurora**, the goddess of the dawn, represented as rising out of the ocean in a chariot.

57. **Sibyl**, a prophetess, often explained as meaning, "one who tells the will of Zeus." In mythology, the Sibyls were women who possessed certain powers of divination and might serve as mediators between men and the gods.

THE LADDER OF SAINT AUGUSTINE (Page 168)

1. **Saint Augustine** was the celebrated father of the Latin Church, who lived from 354 A.D. to 430. His most famous work was his autobiography or *Confessiones*. In Sermon III, he says, "De vitiis nostris scalam nobis facimus, si vitia ipsa calcamus." These words Longfellow has translated in his poem in lines 2-4.

THE PHANTOM SHIP (Page 170)

1. **Cotton Mather**, the author of *Magnalia Christi Americana* (American Ecclesiastical History), was born in Boston 1663 and died 1728. He was a famous scholar, author, and clergyman of Puritan New England.

The story which Longfellow has used in his poem is found in the *Magnalia*, Book I, Chapter 6, and is told by James Pierpont, pastor of the New Haven church.

“Reverend and Dear Sir: In compliance with your desires, I now give you the relation of that APPARITION OF A SHIP IN THE AIR, which I have received from the most credible, judicious, and curious surviving observers of it.

“In the year 1647, besides much other lading, a far more rich treasure of passengers, (five or six of which were persons of chief note and worth in New-Haven) put themselves on board a new ship, built at Rhode-Island, of about 150 tuns; but so walty, that the master (Lamberton) often said she would prove their grave. In the month of January, cutting their way through much ice, on which they were accompanied with the Reverend Mr. Davenport, besides many other friends, with many fears, as well as prayers and tears, they set sail. Mr. Davenport in prayer, with an observable emphasis, used these words: ‘Lord, if it be thy pleasure to bury these our friends in the bottom of the sea, they are thine: save them.’ The spring following, no tidings of these friends arrived with the ships from England. . . . In June next ensuing, a great thunder-storm arose out of the northwest after which (the hemisphere being serene) about an hour before sun-set, a SHIP of like dimensions with the aforesaid, with her canvas and colours abroad, appeared in the air coming up from her harbour’s mouth, which lyes southward from the town, seemingly with her sails filled under a fresh gale, holding her course north, and continuing under observation, sailing against the wind for the space of half an hour.

“Many were drawn to behold this great work of God: yea, the very children cried out, ‘There’s a brave ship!’ At length, crowding up as far as there is usually water sufficient for such a vessel, and so near some of the spectators, as that they imagined a man might hurl a stone on her, her *main-top* seemed to be blown off, but left hanging in the shrouds; then her *mizzen-top*; then all her

masting seemed blown away by the board ; quickly after the *hulk* brought unto a careen, she overset, and so vanished into a smoaky cloud, which in some time dissipated, leaving, as everywhere else, a clear air. The admiring spectators could distinguish the several colours of each part, the principal rigging, and such proportions, as caused not only the generality of persons to say, 'This was the mould of their ship, and this was her tragic end.'"

15. "so crank and walty." Unsteady. Both words are now obsolete in this sense.

THE WARDEN OF THE CINQUE PORTS (Page 172)

"Copied a poem I have just written,—*The Warden of the Cinque-Ports.*" — *Journal*, October 14, 1852.

9. **Cinque Ports**, the French expression for Five Ports. These five towns are the English Channel ports, on the southeast coast of England. Down to the time of Henry VII., they furnished most of the recruits for the English navy. They are governed even to-day by a Lord Warden.

24. The Duke of Wellington, who died on the 13th of September, 1852.

HAUNTED HOUSES (Page 174)

20. **Mortmain**, literally, dead hand ; "possession of lands in dead hands, or hands that cannot transfer, as those of the church."

31. In the Mediæval Ages and in the Early Renaissance, the notion prevailed that planets had a mysterious and powerful influence upon the fates of men. Many words have thus come into our language from the dead science of astrology: *disaster* is "bad star," *aspect* is the way in which the heavens *look at* each other, and *influence* is the "inflowing" of the power of the planets upon the fortune of men, so *jovial*, *saturnine*, *mercurial*.

EMPEROR'S BIRD'S-NEST (Page 176)

1. **Charles V.** (1500–1558) was born in Flanders, became king of Spain in 1516, and Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in 1519.
18. **Dragoon**, a cavalry soldier; a term used in the British army.
21. **Hidalgo**. A contraction for the Spanish words *hijo de algo*, son of something. A title denoting a Spanish nobleman of the lower class.
25. **Macho** is the Spanish word for mule.
34. **Golondrina** is the feminine form for *golondrino*, the Spanish word for swallow. The word has also the colloquial meaning of deserter.

THE TWO ANGELS (Page 178)

In a letter dated April 25, 1855, the poet gives an account of this poem. "It was written on the birth of my younger daughter and the death of the young and beautiful wife of my neighbor and friend, Lowell. It will serve as an answer to one of your questions about life and its many mysteries. To these dark problems there is no other solution possible, except the one word 'Providence.'"

7. The **amaranth** was an imaginary flower which was supposed never to wither. It was found chiefly in classic poetry; here it forms the crown of the Angel of Life.

8. In Greek mythology the **asphodel** was the peculiar plant of the dead; its pale blossoms were supposed to cover the meadows of Hades.

THE JEWISH CEMETERY AT NEWPORT (Page 181)

11. *Exodus xxxi. 18.*
21. **Synagogue**, literally, "a bringing together"; the name of the place of worship of the Jews.

23. **Rabbi**, literally, "my master"; a title given to the Jewish doctors and expounders of the law.

Decalogue, the Ten Commandments, given by God to Moses on Mt. Sinai.

32. **Ishmael** was the son of Abraham and Hagar, *Genesis* xxi.
14. After Isaac was born, Ishmael and Hagar were cast into the wilderness and became commonly regarded as the ancestors of the Arabs.

34. **Ghetto**, really the quarter of an Italian city in which the Jews were compelled to live. Now a general name for the part of any city in which the Jews live. **Judenstrass**, the German name for the same.

40. **Marah**. "And when they [the Israelites] came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; therefore the name of it was called Marah." — *Exodus* xv. 23.

41. The curse of excommunication, a phrase occurring in *I Corinthians* xvi. 22. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha."

43. **Mordecai** was the adopted father of Esther, who frustrated the scheme of Haman to kill all the Jews. See the Book of Esther.

55. The beginning of the Hebrew book is where we should expect the end, consequently they read backward.

OLIVER BASSELIN (Page 183)

Oliver Basselin was a French poet born in Normandy in the latter half of the fifteenth century. He wrote many light and gay songs, only a few of which are known to-day. He gave the name of his native valleys to his songs, Vaux-de-Vire, which has since been corrupted into Vandeville.

51. The **battle of Agincourt** was fought, October 25, 1415, between the French, under Constable d'Albert, and English, under Henry V. The latter were victorious.

VICTOR GALBRAITH (Page 186)

Victor Galbraith was a bugler in a cavalry regiment in the Mexican War. For some breach of discipline he was condemned to be shot. The poem was written April 1, 1855, after a correspondent had sent Longfellow a paragraph relating the incident upon which the poem is founded.

26. Refers to the superstition among soldiers that their names are written on the bullets which will kill them.

MY LOST YOUTH (Page 188)

1. Portland, Maine, where Longfellow was born and where he spent his early years.

13. **Hesperides.** In Greek mythology, the maidens who guarded the golden apples which Earth brought forth as a marriage gift for Hera, wife and sister of Zeus. They lived in the extreme west.

37. This was the fight between the English ship *Boxer* and the American *Enterprise*, which took place in 1813, off the harbor of Portland. Both the captains were killed, and buried side by side in the cemetery overlooking the harbor.

47. **Deering's Woods**, at the edge of Portland, where Longfellow liked to wander as a boy, now preserved as a city park.

THE ROPEWALK (Page 191)

Written May 20, 1854. A **ropewalk** is a long, low building prepared for making ropes.

25. **Mountebank**, literally, mount on a bench; one who sells nostrums at fairs and street corners.

THE GOLDEN MILE-STONE (Page 193)

6. **Afreet** or **afrit** is the Arabic word for demon or monstrous giant.

14. Ariel is the sprite in Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Prospero reminds him of his servitude with the foul witch Sycorax, I, 2 : —

“ As thou report'st thyself, wast then her servant ;
 And, for thou wast a spirit too delicate
 To act her earthy and abhorr'd commands,
 Refusing her grand hests, she did confine thee
 By help of her more potent ministers
 And in her most unmitigable rage,
 Into a cloven pine : within which rift
 Imprison'd thou didst painfully remain
 A dozen years ; within which space she died,
 And left thee there : where thou didst vent thy groans
 As fast as mill-wheels strike.”

CATAWBA WINE (Page 195)

8. Scuppernong, Isabel, Muscadell, Mustang, all are names of varieties of American grapes.

32. Names of kinds of wine.

54. Elixir, an imaginary liquid supposed to have the power of transmuting metals into gold, and also of prolonging life indefinitely.

60. An allusion to the old sign of an ivy bush or branch over the inn door. “ If it be true that good wine needs no bush, 'tis true that a good play needs no epilogue : yet to good wine they do use good bushes ; and good plays prove the better by the help of good epilogues.” Epilogue to *As You Like It*.

SANTA FILOMENA (Page 197)

This poem was first published in the first number of the *Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1857.

Filomena or **Filumena**, a saint of the Roman Catholic Church, was noted for her miraculous powers in healing the sick. “ Long-

fellow gave the name to Florence Nightingale, partly because of her work among the sick and dying in the Crimean War, and partly because of the resemblance between Filumena and Philomela, the Latin name for nightingale."

42. In a chapel in Pisa, Italy, dedicated to Santa Filumena is an altar-piece which represents the saint attended by two angels, and the symbols, the lily, palm, and spear.

THE DISCOVERER OF THE NORTH CAPE (Page 199)

2. **Helgoland**, a small island in the North Sea, a little over a mile long, belonging to the province of Schleswig-Holstein.

3. **King Alfred**, "the Great," king of the West Saxons, ruled from 871 to 901. He was a man of learning and justice, translated much of the literature then extant into Anglo-Saxon. One of the books thus translated was *Epitome of Universal History*, written in Latin by Paulus Orosius. The poem is a free translation of a passage in the Anglo-Saxon.

58. In later editions of the poem this line reads,

"And northward through the haze."

THE FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY OF AGASSIZ (Page 204)

Jean Louis Rodolphe Agassiz was born in Switzerland, May 28, 1807, and died at Cambridge, Massachusetts, December 14, 1873. He came to the United States in 1846, was appointed professor at Harvard University of geology and zoölogy, and was recognized as one of the greatest naturalists of the world. He lies buried in Mt. Auburn Cemetery at Cambridge.

26. **Ranz des Vaches**, literally, chime of the cows. A series of notes sung or blown on the Alpine horn in Switzerland to call the cattle from the valleys to the high pasture lands.

SANDALPHON (Page 207)

According to Jewish tradition, Sandalphon is one of the three angels whose duty is to receive the prayers of the Israelites and to weave them into crowns.

“Finished the poem, *Sandalphon*, — a strange legend from the Talmud, of the Angel of Prayer.” January 18, 1858.

I. **The Talmud** is the book which contains the Jewish traditional laws and regulations of life, explanatory of the Pentateuch.

II. Jacob's dream, *Genesis* xxviii. 12.

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- Pope's The Rape of the Lock and other Poems. Edited by ELIZABETH M. KING.

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